

Seventeenth-Century Witchcraft Trials
in
Scotland and Northern Norway

by
Liv Helene Willumsen

Ph.D. thesis
University of Edinburgh
2008

PAGE
NUMBERING
AS ORIGINAL

I confirm that this thesis has been composed by me and is the result of my own work. It has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Edinburgh, 10 October 2008

Contents

Acknowledgements	viii
Abbreviations	ix
List of Tables.....	x
List of Figures	xiii
1 Introduction	1
1.1 The aim of the study.....	1
1.2 Sources	2
1.2.1 Scotland.....	2
1.2.2 Finnmark	2
1.2.3 Orthography and references	4
1.3 Earlier research.....	4
1.3.1 Scotland.....	4
1.3.2 Finnmark	5
1.4 Hypothesis.....	6
1.4.1 The demonological element	8
1.4.2 The role of the state.....	11
1.4.3 The local courts	13
1.4.4 The role of the church	16
1.4.5 Neighbourhood disputes.....	18
1.4.6 The spoken word	19
1.4.7 Folk belief	22
1.4.8 The superstitious north	23
1.4.9 The personal factor.....	24
1.4.10 The Scottish connection	24
1.5 Methodology	25
1.6 Outline of the thesis.....	33
2 Statistics: Scotland	34
2.1 Data	35
2.2 Gender	36
2.3 Frequency of cases over time	38
2.3.1 General	38
2.3.2 Panic versus non-panic periods.....	40
2.4 Types of trial	44
2.5 Verdict and Sentence.....	54
2.5.1 The European context.....	54
2.5.2 Verdicts in Scotland	56
2.5.3 Estimated executions in Scotland.....	57
2.5.4 Non-capital sentences.....	67
2.6 The demonological element	68
2.6.1 Demonological influence	68
2.6.2 Demonological confessions.....	69
2.6.3 Witches' meetings.....	73
2.6.4 Naming other witches.....	74
2.6.5 Demonological confessions and gender.....	77
2.7 Torture.....	78
2.7.1 General	78
2.7.2 Documentation	79
2.7.3 Torture methods	83

2.8 Neighbourhood disputes.....	84
2.9 Folk belief	86
2.10 Conclusion.....	89
3 Statistics: Finnmark.....	91
3.1 Data	92
3.2 Gender	93
3.3 Frequency of cases over time	93
3.4 Types of trial	97
3.5 Verdict and sentence	99
3.6 The demonological element	101
3.7 Torture.....	104
3.8 Ethnicity	106
3.9 Neighbourhood disputes.....	109
3.10 Folk belief	109
3.11 Conclusion.....	110
4 Mainland Scotland.....	111
4.1 Approach	111
4.2 Margaret Wallace, 1622	111
4.2.1 General	111
4.2.2 The trial	112
4.2.3 The voice of the law	112
4.2.4 The voice of the accused person	117
4.2.5 The voices of the witnesses.....	120
4.2.6 The voice of the scribe	120
4.2.7 Conclusion.....	121
4.3 Margaret Duchill, 1658	121
4.3.1 Approach	121
4.3.2 The case.....	122
4.3.3 The interrogation	125
4.3.4 Demonological elements	127
4.3.5 Conclusion.....	131
4.4 Jonet Morrison, 1662.....	132
4.4.1 General	132
4.4.2 The voice of the scribe	133
4.4.3 The voices of the witnesses.....	135
4.4.4 The voice of the accused person	139
4.4.5 The final fate	144
4.4.6 Conclusion.....	144
4.5 Bessie Weir, Annabell and John Stewart, 1677	145
4.5.1 General	145
4.5.2 The voice of the law	147
4.5.3 Conclusion.....	149
5 Orkney.....	150
5.1 General	150
5.2 Source Material	156
5.3 Frequency.....	158
5.4 Gender and status	161
5.5 The demonological element	162
5.6 Panics versus non-panics.....	163
5.7 Maleficium, healing and fairy belief.....	163

5.8 Neighbourhood disputes.....	164
5.9 Types of trial, verdict and sentence.....	165
5.10 Barbara Bowndie, 1644.....	165
5.10.1 The voice of the law	165
5.10.2 The voices of the interrogators and the accused	167
5.11 Conclusion.....	171
6 Shetland.....	173
6.1 General	173
6.2 Source material and frequency of cases	175
6.3 Types of trial, verdict and sentence.....	178
6.4 The demonological element	179
6.5 Maleficium, healing and fairy belief.....	181
6.6 Social status and neighbourhood disputes.....	182
6.7 Marion Pardoun alias Peblis, 1644.....	183
6.7.1 The trial	183
6.7.2 The discourse.....	184
6.7.3 The voice of the law	185
6.7.4 The voices of the witnesses.....	187
6.7.5 The voice of the accused person	191
6.7.6 The voice of the scribe	193
6.8 Margaret Watson, 1725	194
6.9 Conclusion.....	196
7 Finnmark	200
7.1 The first decades.....	200
7.2 Marit Tamisdatter, 1634.....	201
7.3 The 1662–3 panic	207
7.3.1 General	207
7.3.2 The Rhodius couple and new demonological ideas	212
7.4 Maren Olsdatter, 1663.....	215
7.4.1 The trial	215
7.4.2 The voice of the scribe	217
7.4.3 The voice of the accused	218
7.4.4 The voice of the law	224
7.4.5 Conclusion, 1662–3 panic	225
7.5 Anders Poulsen, 1692.....	227
7.5.1 General	227
7.5.2 The trial	228
7.5.3 The voice of the law	228
7.5.4 The voice of the accused person	233
7.5.5 The reliability of Anders Poulsen's confession.....	242
8 Comparison and conclusions.....	246
8.1 General	246
8.2 Comparison	246
8.2.1 The demonological element	246
8.2.2 The role of the state.....	248
8.2.3 The local courts	250
8.2.4 The role of the church	253
8.2.5 Neighbourhood disputes.....	254
8.2.6 The spoken word	256
8.2.7 Folk belief	257

8.2.8 The superstitious north	258
8.2.9 The personal factor	260
8.2.10 The Scottish connection	261
8.3 Conclusion	263
Appendices	266
A Appendix Statistics: Scotland	266
B Appendix Statistics: Finnmark	299
C Appendix Orkney and Shetland	312
Bibliography	315
Abstract	325

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my first supervisor, Julian Goodare, for his insightful and professional guidance throughout my thesis. I would like to thank my second supervisor, Peter Graves, for good discussions and comments.

I would like to thank Brian Smith at Shetland Museum and Archives, Lerwick, for help with the Shetland sources. I am grateful to John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland, for letting me use trial records in their possession. I would like to thank Sarah Maclean at the Orkney Library and Archive, Kirkwall, for help with the Orkney sources. I would like to thank Diane Baptie for help with the old Scottish tongue. I am also grateful to Lorna Pink for help with old Scots. I would like to thank Alison Duncan for help with modern English. I would like to thank Ronald Black and Andrew Jennings for help with old Gaelic words and folklore. I would also like to thank the staff at the National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh, for help during my work with the witchcraft sources.

I would like to thank Katjana Edwardsen for her comprehensive work with the translation of Norwegian court records into English. Without this translation my thesis could not have been written. I would also like to thank Tore Sørensen and Arne Gunnar Edvardsen at The Regional State Archives of Tromsø for good and professional help during my work with transcription of the court records from Finnmark. For help with etymological questions I would like to thank Tor Guttu. I am grateful to Jørn Øyrehagen Sunde, Aage Thor Falkanger, Jens Chr. Johansen and Hans Eyvind Næss for help with questions related to seventeenth century legislation in Denmark-Norway.

For fruitful discussions I would like to thank Gunnar W. Knutsen, Ellen Alm, Rune Hagen, Per Sörlin, Ole Lindhartsen, William Moore, Raisa Maria Toivo, Marko Nennonnen, Rolf Schulte, Rita Voltmer, Bente Alver, Arne Kruse and Linda Burnett.

I would also like to thank my husband, Terje Vassdal, and my sons, Tomas Willumsen Vassdal and Johannes Willumsen Vassdal, for good support throughout the years of my thesis.

Abbreviations

AF	Amtmannen i Finnmark
APS	<i>The Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland</i> , eds. T. Thomson and C. Innes, 12 vols. (Edinburgh, 1814–75)
BL	British Library
DDD	Database Documentation and Description
DOST	W. A., Craigie, <i>Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue</i> , 12 vols. (Chicago, 1931)
<i>Fasti</i>	H. Scott, <i>Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae: the Succession of Ministers in the Church of Scotland from the Reformation</i> , 8 vols. (Edinburgh, rev. edn., 1915–50)
HP	J. R. N. Macphail (ed.), <i>Highland Papers</i> , 4 vols. (SHS, 1914–34)
LF	Lagting for Finnmark
Lil.	H. H. Lilienskiold
LrV	Lensregnskap for Vardøhus len
MC	Marwick Collection
NAS	National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh
NLD	National Library of Denmark, Copenhagen
OLA	Orkney Library and Archive, Kirkwall
OPR	Orkney Presbytery Records
RA	Riksarkivet [National Archives of Norway], Oslo
RMS	<i>Registrum Magni Sigilli Regum Scotorum</i> (Register of the Great Seal of Scotland), eds., J. M. Thomson et al. (Edinburgh, 1882-)
RPC	P. H. Brown et al. (eds.), <i>The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland</i> , 38 vols. (Edinburgh, 1908–70)
SATØ	Statsarkivet i Tromsø
SAT	Statsarkivet i Trondheim
SBSW	<i>A Source-Book of Scottish Witchcraft</i>
SF	Sorenskriveren i Finnmark
SHR	<i>Scottish Historical Review</i>
SHS	Scottish History Society
SMA	Shetland Museum and Archives, Lerwick
SPR	Shetland Presbytery Records
SRS	Scottish Record Society
SS	Stair Society
SSW	Survey of Scottish Witchcraft
Thott	Thott's collection

List of Tables

Table 1	Gender, all persons accused of witchcraft, Scotland (SSW).....	37
Table 2	Panic versus non-panic periods, Scotland (SSW)	40
Table 3	Persons accused of witchcraft, Scotland, panic versus non-panic periods (SSW).....	41
Table 4	Panic and non-panic periods and gender, Scotland (SSW).....	41
Table 5	Sentences in panic versus non-panic periods, Scotland (SSW)	42
Table 6	Panic periods and executions, Scotland (SSW)	42
Table 7	Women executed in panic versus non-panic periods (SSW)	43
Table 8	Men executed in panic versus non-panic periods (SSW).....	43
Table 9	Types of trial, Scotland (SSW)	45
Table 10	Types of trial and gender, Scotland (SSW).....	46
Table 11	Women, types of trial and panic versus non-panic periods (SSW).....	52
Table 12	Men, types of trial and panic versus non-panic periods.....	52
Table 13	Verdicts and trial types, Scotland.....	56
Table 14	Type of verdict, Scotland	57
Table 15	Ratio of guilty - not guilty verdicts in the circuit courts, Scotland	57
Table 16	Sentence types, Scotland (SSW).....	58
Table 17	'Sentence Execution' distributed in trial types, Scotland	59
Table 18	Estimated executions in Scotland, with confidence intervals	60
Table 19	Combination of sentence types and trial types, Scotland.....	61
Table 20	Aggregated combination of trial types and known sentences, Scotland.....	61
Table 21	All known sentences across three periods, Scotland.....	64
Table 22	'Sentence Execution' compared to trials with known sentences, Scotland	64
Table 23	'Sentence Execution' compared to known sentences and trial types, Scotland.....	66
Table 24	Demonic pact confessions, Scotland.....	70
Table 25	Demonic type confessions, Scotland.....	70
Table 26	Aspects of demonic pacts and trial types, Scotland	72
Table 27	Contents of witches' meetings as elements of confessions, Scotland.....	73
Table 28	Implicated by another witch, Scotland (SSW).....	74
Table 29	Implicated by another witch versus panic years, Scotland (SSW).....	75
Table 30	Demonic pacts and gender, Scotland	77
Table 31	Demonic pact confession, panic years and gender, Scotland.....	77
Table 32	Torture cases, gender and types of trial, Scotland	82
Table 33	Tortured individuals, Scotland.....	83
Table 34	Neighbourhood disputes and gender, Scotland	85
Table 35	Neighbourhood disputes and trial type, Scotland	85
Table 36	Fairy belief and panic years, Scotland	87
Table 37	Fairy belief and gender, Scotland.....	87
Table 38	Accused persons and healing, Scotland	88
Table 39	Cross-tabulation Folk healing and healing humans, Scotland	88
Table 40	Healing and panic years, Scotland	88
Table 41	Healing and gender, Scotland	89
Table 42	Gender, all persons accused of witchcraft, Finnmark	93
Table 43	Gender and panics, Finnmark	96
Table 44	Type of trial and gender in Finnmark	99
Table 45	Types of trial and sentence, Finnmark	99
Table 46	Panics and demonic pact, Finnmark.....	102

Table 47	Demonic pact and gender, Finnmark	104
Table 48	Torture and types of trial, Finnmark	105
Table 49	All cases in Scotland, 1561–1727 (SSW)	267
Table 50	Gender of accused persons 1561–1727, Scotland.....	269
Table 51	Chi-square, panic versus non-panic periods and gender, Scotland.....	270
Table 52	Chi-square, panic versus non-panic periods and execution, Scotland	270
Table 53	Chi-square, females executed in panic versus non-panic periods, Scotland.....	271
Table 54	Chi-square, males executed in panic versus non-panic periods, Scotland.....	271
Table 55	Types of trial by year, Scotland	274
Table 56	Trial type and gender, Scotland	278
Table 57	Chi-square, Trial type and gender, Scotland (SSW).....	278
Table 58	Chi-square, Female, trial type and panic versus non-panic year, Scotland (SSW)	279
Table 59	Males, trial type and panic versus non-panic years, Scotland.....	279
Table 60	‘Field Execution’, by year, Scotland.....	280
Table 61	Sentences 1563–1727, Scotland.....	286
Table 62	Sentence execution compared to known sentences and trial types, 1563–1619, Scotland.....	287
Table 63	Sentence execution compared to known sentences and trial types, 1620–1674, Scotland.....	288
Table 64	Sentence execution compared to known sentences and trial types, 1675–1725, Scotland.....	288
Table 65	‘Field Execution’ detailed, 1577–1698, Scotland.....	290
Table 66	Chi-square test, implicated by another, secondary characterisation, Scotland	290
Table 67	Demonic pact confessions 1576–1709, panic years shaded, Scotland	291
Table 68	Name of tortured persons by torture date, case date and torture type, Scotland....	295
Table 69	Neighbourhood disputes, by year, Scotland.....	295
Table 70	Chi-square neighbourhood disputes and panic periods, Scotland.....	296
Table 71	Neighbourhood dispute and sentence, Scotland.....	296
Table 72	Fairy and elf beliefs by year, Scotland.....	298
Table 73	Variables SPSS, Finnmark	300
Table 74	Accused persons, Finnmark	303
Table 75	Gender and end of trial, by year, Finnmark	304
Table 76	Gender and linked trials, Finnmark.....	304
Table 77	Chi-square test linked trials and gender, Finnmark	305
Table 78	Chi-square linked trials and panics, Finnmark.....	305
Table 79	Panic periods and gender, Finnmark.....	305
Table 80	Chi-square test panics, non-panics and gender, Finnmark.....	306
Table 81	Chi-square panics and the demonic pact, Finnmark	306
Table 82	Panics, female and the demonic pact, Finnmark.....	306
Table 83	Type of trial and gender, Finnmark.....	306
Table 84	Types of trial and sentence execution, Finnmark.....	307
Table 85	Neighbour quarrels and gender, Finnmark.....	307
Table 86	Demonic pact and place of trial, Finnmark.....	308
Table 87	Torture and the demonic pact, Finnmark	308
Table 88	Torture and cases where accused denied first, Finnmark	308
Table 89	Torture and panics, Finnmark	309
Table 90	Panics, female and torture, Finnmark	309
Table 91	Types of trial and torture, Finnmark	309
Table 92	Ethnicity of accused persons, Finnmark	310
Table 93	Ethnicity and gender of accused persons, Finnmark.....	310

Table 94	Ethnicity and panics, Finnmark.....	310
Table 95	Ethnicity and reputation sorcery, Finnmark.....	310
Table 96	Male, ethnicity and reputation sorcery, Finnmark	311
Table 97	Female, ethnicity and reputation sorcery, Finnmark.....	311
Table 98	Neighbour witnesses and gender of accused, Finnmark	311
Table 99	Neighbour witnesses and linked trials, Finnmark	311
Table 100	Total accused and gender, by year, Orkney and Shetland	312
Table 101	Socioeconomic status and gender, Orkney	312
Table 102	Trial type and gender, Orkney	313
Table 103	Sentence and gender, Orkney.....	313
Table 104	List of accused persons, by year, Shetland	313
Table 105	Accused persons and gender, by year, Shetland	314

List of Figures

Figure 1	Map of Scotland.....	34
Figure 2	Witchcraft cases by year 1561–1727, Scotland (SSW)	39
Figure 3	Accused persons and types of trial, Scotland, 1563–1619 (SSW).....	47
Figure 4	Accused persons and types of trial, Scotland, 1620–1674 (SSW).....	48
Figure 5	Accused persons and types of trial, Scotland, 1675–1725	50
Figure 6	Witchcraft trials in Scotland into three periods of equal length	63
Figure 7	Map of Finnmark	91
Figure 8	Witchcraft cases by year 1600–92, Finnmark	94
Figure 9	Number of trials by gender and year, Finnmark.....	96
Figure 10	Witchcraft trials in Finnmark, by type of court and year.....	98
Figure 11	Frequency of ethnicity by year, Finnmark.....	107
Figure 12	Map of Orkney.....	150
Figure 13	Witchcraft cases by year 1594–1708, Orkney	158
Figure 14	Panics versus non-panics , Orkney	163
Figure 15	Map of Shetland.....	173
Figure 16	Witchcraft cases by year 1602–1725, Shetland.....	175
Figure 17	Place of living and place of trial 1662–3, Finnmark.....	208
Figure 18	Web of denunciations 1662–3, Finnmark.....	209
Figure 19	Anders Poulsen’s rune drum, Finnmark	230

1 Introduction

1.1 *The aim of the study*

The aim of this study is to compare seventeenth-century witchcraft trials in the two areas of Scotland and Finnmark in northern Norway. The time span is 1600–1692. This period has been chosen with regard to the Finnmark witchcraft trials, which lasted throughout the seventeenth century. The thesis contains quantitative as well as qualitative analyses. The Scottish witchcraft material before 1600 and after 1700 is not focused on in the qualitative parts of my study, but data from the entire period of Scottish witch-hunting are included in the quantitative analyses.

I have chosen to compare two areas: Scotland, and Finnmark, the northernmost district of Norway, today called a county. The two areas are not simply case-studies of a European phenomenon, but display basic similarities within a number of fields, and also affect each other more directly through individuals involved in the witch-hunt. The two areas may have affected each other with regard to intellectual demonological notions being spread from Scotland to Finnmark during the early period of witch-hunt. My main reason for choosing these two areas has to do with earlier witchcraft studies from these regions which demonstrate that demonological elements related to a learned doctrine which spread throughout Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were accentuated there.¹ Both areas suffered severe witchcraft trials. Both are located to the north of a central power, and both had similar legal, religious, social and ethnic conditions in the seventeenth century. The northern islands, Orkney and Shetland, are of particular interest, as historically they had strong ties to Norway. Another reason for choosing Scotland and Finnmark is the situation with regard to sources for witchcraft trials. Both areas have good surveys of primary sources, and archival conditions which allow access to primary sources. In Scotland, a documentation project related to witchcraft trials, the Survey of Scottish Witchcraft (SSW) led by Julian Goodare at the University of Edinburgh, has been a motivating factor for undertaking this study. Completed in 2003, this survey updates references to source material for all known Scottish witchcraft trials.

Witchcraft trials are an extensive field of study. A complete discussion of the documentation must deal with a complex of economic, social, psychological and ideological factors. In my hypothesis, discussed below, I have chosen to concentrate on ten factors

¹ For instance works by Christina Lerner, Brian P. Levack and Julian Goodare for the Scottish material, and for Finnmark studies by Kirsten Bergh, Einar Niemi and Liv Helene Willumsen.

underlying the witch-hunt in Scotland and Finnmark, mentioned in section 1.4. The qualitative as well as the quantitative analyses will aim to substantiate and give evidence for my hypothesis. The ten factors will structure the discussion in the last chapter of the thesis. Gender is an important aspect, related to several of these factors. The gender question will accordingly be highlighted throughout the analyses, as a constant dimension of the witch-hunt.

1.2 Sources

1.2.1 Scotland

My main entry to the Scottish sources is the SSW, a database with registrations of all Scottish witchcraft trials. The Survey gives references to the primary sources related to each accused person, 3212 named individuals in total. Most of the Scottish sources consist of court records from central, mixed central-local and local trials, in addition to kirk session and presbytery minutes. The sources from the Scottish witchcraft trials vary greatly in length and quality, as relatively few complete trial records have survived. However, dittays (endictments) are often found. These notes record the confessions by suspects and statements by neighbours before the formal trial took place, often as a result of interrogation before a kirk session or presbytery. In Scotland, several transcriptions of separate witchcraft trials have been published, but many of the court records from witchcraft trials have not yet been published.

My quantitative analyses for Scotland are based on SSW. My choice of court records for the qualitative analyses is mainly based on the following reasons: representation of early and late cases, representation of females and males, and court records long and detailed enough to be suitable for narratological analyses. The choice of sources will be discussed in further detail below related to the various qualitative analyses in chapters 4, 5 and 6.

1.2.2 Finnmark

The most important primary sources documenting witchcraft trials in Finnmark consist of proceedings of court records from local trials, held in the court of the Finnmark District Magistrate. The court records exist from 1620 onwards, throughout the whole period of witchcraft trials in Finnmark, with the exception of a lacuna for the period 1633–1647. This lacuna is partly filled by copies of sentences in the archives of the Magistrate of Finnmark.² The court records from Finnmark are very valuable witchcraft sources because the trials are recorded from beginning to end. Due to their richness and detail, these documents offer a multi-layered potential for interpretation of the witch-hunt – of interest internationally –

² SATØ, SF, no. 2543.

particularly with regard to the accused persons' confessions. The court records from the local courts in Finnmark for the period 1620–33 have been published.³

In addition to the court records, the district accounts for Finnmark are primary sources for the witchcraft trials in the area. These are particularly valuable for the period before 1620, as other primary sources are lacking. Even if the information in these accounts is limited, these fiscal documents show the expenses of the state for burning sentenced persons, and the state's income in relation to accused persons' property.⁴ Court records from the Court of Appeal, held by the Court Appeal Judge, which was held in Finnmark every third year, complement the records from local courts for those cases passed on to the Court of Appeal.⁵ The Court Appeal was according to statute of 1590 supposed to hear only second instance cases. Christian IV tried to set the various courts in Norway into a system where the local court acted as the first instance court and the Court of Appeal as the second instance court.⁶ However, there are several examples from the witchcraft trials in Finnmark that this court acted as a first instance court.⁷ The Court Appeal Judge's main obligation was to hold Court of Appeals at Steigen in Nordland, where he had his seat. To a certain extent the circuit Court of Appeal can be compared with some Scottish mixed central-local trials, which were also circuit courts with central representatives held in local places of trial.

Some witchcraft documents from before 1620 and from the period of the lacuna have been copied in a document written by a later district governor at Vardøhus, Hans H. Lilienskiold.⁸ Lilienskiold's copies of the documents are abbreviated and fragmented compared to the original court records.

My quantitative analyses for Finnmark are based on my transcription and data registration of the seventeenth century Finnmark court records. My choice of court records for the qualitative analyses is based on the same reasons as mentioned above for the Scottish material and will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 7.

³ Sandvik, H. and Winge, H., (eds.), *Tingbok for Finnmark 1620–33* (Oslo, 1987).

⁴ RA, Lensregnskaper for Vardøhus len, Rentekammeret, 1600–92.

⁵ SAT, Lagtingsprotokoll for Nordland og Finnmark, 1647–83.

⁶ 'Instansbrevet' from 1590, Sunde, J. Ø., *Speculum legale – rettsspejelen* (Bergen, 2005), 197–98.

⁷ For instance Karen Edisdatter, 1620, SATØ, SF 6, fos. 10v–12v.

⁸ Lilienskiold's document, 'Trolldom oc anden ugudelighed udi dette seculo sig hafuer tildragen blant fin som Nordmand', is kept in Thott's collection 950,2°, NLD. R. Hagen and P. E. Sparboe have published an edited version, H. H. Lilienskiold, *Trolldom og ugudelighet i 1600-tallets Finnmark* (Tromsø, 1998).

1.2.3 Orthography and references

The primary sources quoted in the thesis are transcribed verbatim. When quoting from Scottish and Norwegian primary sources I use the original orthography, likewise for personal names and place names. Square brackets with text in italics inserted in transcribed text denote editor's comments. In my own text, however, I use modernised spelling of personal and place names. Again, square brackets are used for editorial comments, and Latin words are in italics. A list of abbreviations is provided at the beginning of the thesis. Explanation of words, comments related to content and bibliographical references are found in footnotes. The transcription of primary sources has kept the original punctuation; for example, the colon is not used in the original sources from Norway. The Norwegian court records have been translated into English by Katjana Edwardsen. In the qualitative analyses the term 'close-reading' of sources is used. This is a technical term in text analysis and is therefore hyphenated. In the documents, a diversity of spelling of proper names occurs. For spelling of proper names outside the quotations, I have chosen to follow the norm used in SSW, except Marion Pardoun, where the spelling follows the transcription.

References to figures are found in the bibliography. Likewise are translations from Norwegian into English of titles of books, titles of articles and archival sources found in the bibliography.

1.3 Earlier research

1.3.1 Scotland

As the field of witchcraft research has increased enormously during the last fifteen years, I will mention only a selection of studies. Christian Lerner's book *Enemies of God: the witch-hunt in Scotland* (1981) must be mentioned as one of the first studies to make the Scottish witch-hunt known internationally. This book is a pioneer study of Scottish witch-hunt and will be referred to, not least in comparison with later studies. Brian P. Levack has written articles and books about the witchcraft trials in Scotland and Europe, including the recently published *Witch-hunting in Scotland. Law, Politics and Religion* and *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*.⁹ Levack's work has been influential in witchcraft research internationally

⁹ *Witch-hunting in Scotland* (New York, 2008); *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe* (3rd edn., London, 2006). Among articles to be mentioned are 'Themes of Recent Witchcraft Research' in *Arv, Nordic Yearbook of Folklore*, vol. lxii (2006), 7–32, 'The Great Scottish Witch Hunt of 1661–1662', *Journal of British Studies*, xx (1980), 90–108 and 'Judicial Torture in Scotland during the Age of Mackenzie', *Miscellany IV*, SS, il (2002), 185–98.

and provides important knowledge to be drawn upon for the part of this thesis dealing with Scotland.

The SSW team has published two books on Scottish witchcraft. The first, *The Scottish witch-hunt in context*, edited by Julian Goodare, contains eleven articles on different topics and from different perspectives.¹⁰ The second book from the SSW team, *Witchcraft and Belief in Early Modern Scotland* (2008), edited by Julian Goodare, Lauren Martin and Joyce Miller, is a collection of ten chapters focusing on the beliefs behind witchcraft prosecutions.¹¹ The research by the SSW team and the data made available by the SSW provide updated and valuable information of great importance for my thesis.

Several theses deal with witchcraft as an aspect of folk belief; Lizanne Henderson has written about traditional Scottish fairy belief, Joyce Miller has written about witchcraft and healing, Alaric Hall has written about fairy belief.¹² The gender perspective of the Scottish witch-hunt has been dealt with in articles by Goodare and Lerner.¹³

Studies from separate parts of Scotland have contributed to knowledge of the witch-hunt. Stuart Macdonald and Julian Goodare have studied the witches of Fife and P. G. Maxwell-Stuart the North Berwick witches.¹⁴ Maxwell-Stuart and Levack have both studied the witch-hunt of 1661–62.¹⁵ Anna Cordey's thesis about the witch-hunt in Dalkeith is a valuable contribution to studies of a local witch-hunt.¹⁶

1.3.2 Finnmark

The Finnmark witchcraft trials have been studied by Kirsten Bergh, Einar Niemi, Randi Rønning Balsvik, Liv Helene Willumsen and Rune Hagen. Kirsten Bergh wrote an article on this topic in 1960.¹⁷ Studies by Niemi (1983) and Rønning Balsvik (1989) were conducted as

¹⁰ Manchester, 2002.

¹¹ Hampshire, 2008.

¹² Henderson, L., *Supernatural Traditions and Folk Beliefs in an Age of Transition: Witchcraft and Charming in Scotland, c.1670–1740* (University of Strathclyde, Ph.D. thesis, 2004); Miller, J., *Cantrips and Carlins: Magic, Medicine and Society in the Presbyteries of Haddington and Stirling, 1600–1688* (University of Stirling, Ph.D. thesis, 1999); Hall, A., *The Meaning of Elf, and Elves, in Medieval England* (University of Glasgow, Ph.D. thesis, 2005).

¹³ Goodare, J., 'Women and the witch-hunt in Scotland', *Social History*, xxiii (1998), 288–307; Lerner, C., 'Was witch-hunting woman-hunting?', *New Society*, (8. Oct. 1981), 11–3.

¹⁴ Macdonald, S., *The witches of Fife. Witch-hunting in a Scottish Shire, 1560–1710* (East Linton, 2002); Maxwell-Stuart, P. G., *Satan's Conspiracy: Magic and Witchcraft in Sixteenth-Century Scotland* (East Linton, 2001); Goodare, J., 'The Scottish witchcraft panic of 1597', *The Scottish witch-hunt in context* (Manchester, 2002), 51–72.

¹⁵ Maxwell-Stuart, P. G., *An abundance of witches. The Great Scottish Witch-hunt* (Gloucestershire, 2005).

¹⁶ Cordey, A. L., *Witch-hunting in the Presbytery of Dalkeith, 1649 to 1662* (University of Edinburgh, M. Sc., 2003).

¹⁷ Bergh, K., 'Til ild og bål', in G. I. Willoch, (ed.), *Vardøhus festning 650 år* (Oslo, 1960), 126–44.

parts of local history series.¹⁸ Liv Helene Willumsen has worked on this topic since the 1980s. She has written a master's thesis and published a book and several articles about the witch-hunt in Finnmark.¹⁹ In the last decade, Rune Hagen has also written articles about the Finnmark witchcraft trials.²⁰

For Norwegian witchcraft trials as a whole, Hans Eyvind Næss has written a doctoral thesis.²¹ Gunnar W. Knutsen has researched witchcraft trials in the south-east of Norway, and has also published articles on Norwegian witchcraft trials.²² Ellen Alm has written a master's thesis about the role of the state during witch prosecutions in Denmark-Norway.²³ Ragnhild Botnheim has written a master's thesis about witchcraft trials in the western parts of Norway.²⁴ Bente Alver has written a book about Norwegian witchcraft belief.²⁵ Rune Hagen has published a book about witchcraft in general, as well as a historiography of European witchcraft trials.²⁶

1.4 Hypothesis

The historical witchcraft trials in Scotland and Finnmark – like other European witch-hunts – were very complex phenomena. There are basic similarities between the two geographical areas treated in this thesis, which make a comparison both possible and fruitful. My hypothesis is that the co-existence of several factors working in the same direction, influencing different levels of society, prepared the ground for witch-hunting to start and to

¹⁸ Niemi, E., *Vadsøs historie*, i (Vadsø, 1983), 219–28; Balsvik, R. R., *Vardø. Grensepost og fiskevær 1850–1950*, i (Vardø, 1989), 33–6.

¹⁹ Willumsen, L. H., *Trollkvinne i nord i historiske kilder og skjønnlitteratur* (University of Tromsø, Master's thesis, 1984), *Trollkvinne i nord* (Tromsø, 1994), 'Witches of the High North. The Finnmark Witchcraft Trials in the Seventeenth Century', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, xxii, no. 3 (1997), 199–221, 'Witches in Scotland and Northern Norway: two case studies', in A. Kruse and P. Graves, *Images and Imaginations. Perspectives on Britain and Scandinavia* (Edinburgh, 2007), 35–66.

²⁰ Among them are 'Sami Shamanism: The Arctic Dimension', *Magic, Rituals, and Witches*, i, no. 2 (2006), 227–33 and 'Female Witches and Sami Sorcerers in the Witch Trials of Arctic Norway', *Arv, Nordic Yearbook of Folklore*, vol. lxii (2006), 123–42.

²¹ Næss, H. E., *Trolldomsprosessene i Norge på 1500–1600-tallet. En retts- og sosialhistorisk undersøkelse* (Oslo, 1982).

²² Knutsen, G. W., *Trolldomsprosessene på Østlandet. En kulturhistorisk undersøkelse* (Oslo, 1998); 'A central periphery? Witchcraft trials in south-eastern Norway' in S. Sogner (ed.), *Fact, fiction and forensic evidence* (Oslo, 1997), 63–74; 'Norwegian witchcraft trials: a reassessment', *Continuity and Change*, xviii, no. 2 (2003), 185–200; 'The End of the Witch Hunts in Scandinavia', *Arv, Nordic Yearbook of Folklore*, lxii (2006), 143–64.

²³ Alm, Ellen, *Statens rolle i trolldomsprosessene i Danmark og Norge på 1500- og 1600-tallet. En komparativ undersøkelse* (University of Tromsø, Master's thesis, 2000).

²⁴ Botnheim, Ragnhild, *Trolldomsprosessene i Bergenhus len, 1566–1700* (University of Bergen, Master's thesis, 1999).

²⁵ Alver, Bente, *Heksetro og trolddom* (Oslo, 1971).

²⁶ *Hekser. Fra forfølgelse til fortryllelse* (Oslo, 2003) and *Dei europeiske hekseprosessane* (Oslo, 2007).

continue.²⁷ The main causes may be summarised in the ten factors below, which I will argue had an impact on the start and development of witch-hunting in Scotland and Finnmark. These factors will be grouped into two main approaches, both being necessary for the initiation and spread of witch-hunts.

Firstly, mention must be made of the major influential and inter-dependent factors pushing and supporting witch-hunt, namely the spread of demonological ideas, and pressure for the persecution of witches from the state, the courts, the church and the local community. The demonological element plays a central role in the urge to persecution because of the impact such notions had on law, politics and religion, entering into the official laws and the religious scriptures upon which preaching in the churches relied.

Secondly, mention must be made of factors related to the spread of demonological ideas among peasants in local communities. I will argue that the personal factor is important for the spreading of demonological ideas. It is unlikely that learned demonological ideas and traditional beliefs could exist for a long time on different 'levels' in a community without merging. Society was oral, and demonological notions were fused with traditional oral narratives, using the same form, structure and stylistic devices as narratives known from folk belief. Narratives containing demonological concepts were transmitted rapidly from person to person, and became known in the community. Why accused individuals delivered demonological confessions, knowing well that they were sealing their own death warrants, is difficult to explain. The usual answer is torture. Accused persons were asked leading questions by interrogators. As the confessions are much more detailed than the questions, the sources indicate that demonological ideas were known by the accused before they entered the courtroom. When the accused were imprisoned, interrogated and tortured, they retold what they knew in response to leading questions. The source material from Finnmark in particular offers rich documentation of confessions which express demonological ideas as part of accused individuals' knowledge, not as ideas coming from judicial officials, a point made by Robin Briggs in *Witches and Neighbours* (1996).

Popular beliefs in Scotland and Finnmark at the beginning of the seventeenth century are not known. What has been written down from popular belief is mostly from the nineteenth century, and was an activity related to the Romantic movement.²⁸ In fact, most of what has been presented as folk belief from the seventeenth century comes from witchcraft confessions

²⁷ This is also formulated by Raisa Maria Toivo in her article 'Women at Stake: Interpretations of Women's Roles in Witchcraft', *Arv, Nordic Yearbook of Folklore*, lxii (2006), 199.

²⁸ For instance, the Grimm brothers started to publish *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* in 1812 and Walter Scott published *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* in two volumes in 1802.

in court records. Therefore it is not possible to give evidence for the mentality of peasants at the time of the witch-hunt. Neither is it possible to say to what extent the confessions were influenced by folk belief.

What it is possible to say is that the confessions have the same form and use the same literary devices as the tales later known as characteristic of folk tradition. It is also possible to say that most Europeans were convinced that specific ethnic groups, well versed in the art of magic, were living in Finnmark as well as Scotland. The Sami people and the Highlanders were both minority ethnic groups with their own language and culture. Certain superstitious characteristics have been attributed to these ethnic groups, and this may have contributed to an increase in suspicion with regard to potential witches living in these areas.

The factors which I suggest underlie the witch-hunt in Scotland and Finnmark will be commented upon below, as they form the structural backbone of my thesis. Together, they will constitute the permanent range of focus for the quantitative as well as the qualitative analyses, and they will be taken up again for discussion in the final chapter of the thesis: Comparison and conclusions. Some factors will be dealt with in greater detail than others, due to the nature of my primary sources. The weight of my study will be on court records and interpretation of these. The list of factors below will indicate and clarify how quantitative and qualitative analyses of the primary witchcraft sources may offer new knowledge about the witch-hunt. I will argue – and try to demonstrate – that these factors quickly progressed to the holding of witchcraft trials because of the interplay between legal, religious and ideological influences. Included in this picture is the spread of demonological notions from the learned elite, as well as the reception of these ideas on the part of peasants. My assumption is that together these factors created particular conditions, well suited to the outbreak of severe witchcraft trials.

1.4.1 The demonological element

I use the term ‘the demonological element’ similarly to Christina Lerner, as an umbrella term for all aspects of demonology appearing in the primary sources.²⁹ In my view, ‘demonological’ is more precise than ‘demonic’ with regard to the actual influence from learned demonology that we can observe in the witchcraft material. However, I use the term ‘demonic’ in connection with the demonic pact, as this has become customary use in the discourse of witchcraft research. Demonology has been stressed by several witchcraft scholars,

²⁹ Lerner, C., *Enemies of God* (Oxford, 1983), 17, 18, 24; Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 7, 10, 77.

among them Christina Larner and Brian P. Levack, as a marked element in the Scottish witchcraft trials.³⁰ I see demonological notions as influential due to, firstly, laws regarding witchcraft in the realms of Scotland and Denmark-Norway; secondly, religious thinking and writing in these two post-Reformation areas, and thirdly, oral tradition and folk belief already existing in these communities.

Several works on demonology stand as landmarks in the literature on witchcraft, and have added to knowledge related to belief in the Devil. Most of these works have been published from the 1970s up to the present. I share Stuart Clark's confidence 'that demonology ought to have something to offer those seeking to explain the witch trials'.³¹ Sustained by broad readings of demonological works, Clark points to demonology as one of the necessary ingredients of the history of witchcraft. Concentrating on 'how witchcraft (and allied) beliefs made whatever sense they did during their period of maximum appeal to intellectuals',³² this synchronic study of demonology is a valuable contribution to interpretations of witchcraft belief in early modern Europe. Several other witchcraft scholars have emphasised demonology in their works, among them Norman Cohn and E. William Monter.³³ For the Scottish context, Larner and Levack have emphasised the demonological element as an important explanation for the witch-hunt. With regard to the North Norwegian witchcraft trials, Liv Helene Willumsen in her study *Trollkvinne i nord* (1984) was the first scholar to demonstrate the astonishing number of demonological trials in Finnmark.³⁴

How did learned European demonological ideas first come to Scotland and to Finnmark? Nobody so far has given the answer. Demonological ideas were known in Scotland before the passing of the 1563 Witchcraft Act, as demonic pact was mentioned in a vernacular catechism as early as 1552.³⁵ J. Wormald argues that demonological notions were present in the confession of Janet Boyman in 1572.³⁶ Edward J. Cowan relates demonological ideas to a meeting on Halloween 1589, when a mysterious group of figures assembled outside North Berwick kirk and entered into a pact with the Devil.³⁷ Cowan gives his support to

³⁰ Larner, *Enemies*, 129–130; Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 80.

³¹ Clark, S., *Thinking with Demons: the idea of witchcraft in early modern Europe* (Oxford, 1997), p. vii.

³² Clark, *Thinking with Demons*, 683.

³³ Cohn, N., *Europe's Inner Demons* (London, 1993), 233; Monter, W. E. (ed.), *European Witchcraft* (New York, 1969), 55.

³⁴ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne*, (1984).

³⁵ Larner, *Enemies*, 163.

³⁶ Wormald, J., 'The Witches, the Devil and the King' in T. Brotherstone and D. Ditchburn, *Freedom and Authority* (East Linton, 2000), 171.

³⁷ Cowan, E. B., 'The Darker Vision of the Scottish Renaissance: the Devil and Francis Stewart', in I. B. Cowan and D. Shaw (eds.), *The Renaissance and Reformation in Scotland. Essays in Honour of Gordon Donaldson* (Edinburgh, 1983), 125.

Larner, who suggested that King James brought demonological ideas with him from Denmark after having met Danish theologians.³⁸ Maxwell-Stuart has another opinion, arguing that Niels Hemmingsen, the leading contemporary Danish theologian – who, at the time of the Scottish king's visit, had been suspended from his job at the university and had withdrawn to Roskilde – did not believe in some of the main demonological points (such as the witches' ability to fly), and that the Scottish king did not bring demonological ideas back from Denmark.³⁹ As for Hemmingsen, it is true that he did not believe in the witches' meetings or their ability to fly. But he did believe that the witch entered a pact with the Devil; she could not develop her own magical force, but received this from the Devil and was the Devil's servant.⁴⁰ Further, he believed that Satan could perform his deeds on earth through witches, and that women due to their lesser ability to believe in God, were easily tempted by the Devil. And Hemmingsen was in favour of stronger persecution of witches. At the centre of Hemmingsen's doctrine was the understanding that the relation between each separate witch and the Devil was the cause for evil-doing. Thus there is no doubt that Hemmingsen saw the relation between the witch and the Devil as the core of the witch's power to do evil, or that his doctrine was founded on demonological grounds, even if he disbelieved some demonological features.

As seen from the debate referred to above, various arguments have been used related to the introduction of demonological ideas, particularly the demonic pact, in Scotland. On one hand there is Larner's argument 'that James VI imported the pact from Denmark to Scotland in 1590'.⁴¹ On the other hand there is Wormald's, Cowan's and Maxwell-Stuart's criticism of Larner's view. Wormald and Cowan argue that the demonic pact was known before 1590.⁴² Maxwell-Stuart's argument is that the demonic pact was 'unimportant even after that date'.⁴³ Julian Goodare points out that discussion on how ideas about the demonic pact came to Scotland has neglected the question of ideas about the sabbath, in particular the feature of digging up of corpses and using bits of them.⁴⁴ Goodare maintains, with reference to among others P. G. Maxwell-Stuart, that it is unlikely that particular ideas related to the sabbath were

³⁸ Larner, C., 'James VI and I and Witchcraft' in Alan G. R. Smith (ed.), *The Reign of James VI and I* (London, 1973), 81.

³⁹ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne*, (1994), 60; Maxwell-Stuart, P. G., 'The fear of the king is death: James VI and the witches of East Lothian', in Naphy, W. G. and Roberts, P., (eds.), *Fear in early modern society* (Manchester, 1997), 212–13; Goodare, 'Scottish Witchcraft in its European Context', 40.

⁴⁰ Schulte, R., 'Der dänische Reformator: Niels Hemmingsen', in *Hexenverfolgung in Schleswig-Holstein* (Heide, 2001).

⁴¹ Goodare, J., 'The Scottish Witchcraft Act', *Church History*, lxxiv, no. 1 (2005), 58.

⁴² Wormald, 'The Witches, the Devil and the King', 170–74; Cowan, 'Darker Vision', 125; Goodare, 'Scottish Witchcraft Act', 59.

⁴³ Goodare, 'Scottish Witchcraft Act', 59; Maxwell-Stuart, 'Fear of the king', 211–13.

⁴⁴ Goodare, 'Scottish Witchcraft in its European Context', 40.

brought by King James to Scotland after the king's wedding tour to Denmark.⁴⁵ However, because evidence is scant on the conversational topics between Hemmingsen and King James, I think it is important to consider whether there were alternative ways in which the king might have got his demonological knowledge.⁴⁶

In Finnmark, the first documented appearance of demonological notions is in the 1620s, just after the Scotsman John Cunningham entered office as district governor at Vardøhus in 1619. I find this Scottish connection interesting, and consider this to be an important point related to the introduction of demonological notions into Finnmark.

1.4.2 The role of the state

To what extent was the state responsible for witchcraft trials? In this thesis, the role of the state will be seen, firstly, related to politics as exercised in the realms, secondly, to the influence the state had in the legal arena. The term 'politics' will be used here in accordance with Levack's definition: 'The word politics covers a multitude of meanings, and I am using it here to identify all those considerations of governance that may have impelled central or local authorities to inaugurate or encourage witch-hunts, sustain them once they had begun or at least allow them to continue'.⁴⁷ I share Levack's emphasis on witchcraft trials as judicial operations. The state's role in witchcraft trials is closely interwoven with legislation and the functioning of the courts as well as the church. In addition, periods of political unrest which in turn influenced the outbreak of panics during witch-hunt were certainly influenced by the state.⁴⁸ As an overall power, the state indisputably contributed to witch-hunt.

Active attempts to prosecute witches were made by the kings in Scotland as well as in Denmark-Norway. The policy of both kingdoms had as its aim cleansing the country of ungodly persons. In addition to this national agenda, the monarchs felt personally the threat of witches, or at least believed in the evil-doing of witches. In Scotland, King James VI was an active witch-hunter in his early years as king. He was personally involved in the 1590 trials, as the fetching of his Danish bride was allegedly prevented by co-operation between Danish and Scottish witches.⁴⁹ The Danish-Norwegian King Christian IV several times felt threatened

⁴⁵ Goodare, 'Scottish Witchcraft in its European Context', 48, note 80; Maxwell-Stuart, 'The fear of the king is death', 212–13; Riis, T., *Should Auld Acquaintance Be Forgotten*, 2 vols. (Odense, 1988), i, 266–9.

⁴⁶ T. Riis mentions that one topic of conversation was predestination, *Should Auld Acquaintance*, 2 vols., i, 121.

⁴⁷ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 3.

⁴⁸ Larner, *Enemies*, 198.

⁴⁹ Goodare, 'The Framework for Scottish Witch-Hunting in the 1590s', *SHR*, 81, (2002), 240; Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 35.

by alleged Sami sorcery, for example on his voyage to Finnmark and Kola in 1599.⁵⁰ He also stated that his aim was to cleanse the Finnmark area in the north of witches. Thus one could say that in both areas the states in person, namely the kings, were active in hunting witches both as part of an official policy and as a result of personal fear.

The influence of the state in the legal arena may be marked by laws passed, the decision for a criminal trial to be held, and the actual witchcraft trials held. In Scotland, the witchcraft statute of 1563 brought witchcraft within the jurisdiction of the secular courts, whereas punishment for witches before the Reformation was carried out by church courts.⁵¹ Studies by Levack and Goodare give comprehensive and detailed information about the role of the state and the governmental framework during the Scottish witch-hunt.⁵² Goodare focuses on one of the stages of criminal procedure, whether a criminal trial should be held, and argues the case for a 'harmonious co-operation between kirk session identifying witches and privy council authorising trials'.⁵³ He underlines that Scottish witch-hunting was a centralised operation due to the privy council's monopoly position with regard to appointing commissions for trying witches in local courts.⁵⁴ Levack has another perspective on the interaction between state and local community. He sees witch-hunting in Scotland as 'a local affair that the central government tried to control, regulate and eventually eliminate, but not always with complete success'.⁵⁵ My view is that pressure from local authorities was decisive for the Scottish witch-hunt.

The legal background for witch-hunt in Finnmark has been dealt with in two studies. Ellen Alm has compared the role of the state in Denmark and Norway during the witch-hunt.⁵⁶ Hans Eyvind Næss has treated legal conditions in Finnmark as a part of a national approach in his doctoral thesis.⁵⁷ Statutes of 1593 and 1594 make it clear that the judiciary's approach to witchcraft became more intransigent just before the turn of the century.⁵⁸ Then there was a new decree of 1617, in which the 'right' witches were defined as those who had entered a pact with the Devil. This decree obviously had an impact on witchcraft persecutions in Norway. This demonic pact as one of the main characteristics of a seventeenth century

⁵⁰ Niemi, E., 'Christian 4s Finnmarksreise i 1599', *Årbok for Foreningen til norske fortidsminnesmerkers bevaring* (1988), 34; Grubbe, S., 'Kongens sjøreise', in R. B. Hagen and P. E. Sparboe, *Kongens reise til det ytterste nord. Dagbøker fra Christian IVs tokt til Finnmark og Kola i 1599* (Tromsø, 2004), 77.

⁵¹ Goodare, 'Witch-hunting and the Scottish state', 124–25.

⁵² Goodare, 'Framework for Scottish Witch-Hunting', 240; Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 240–50.

⁵³ Goodare, 'Witch-hunting and the Scottish state', 134.

⁵⁴ Goodare, 'Witch-hunting and the Scottish state', 122, 139; 'Framework for Scottish Witch-Hunting', 248.

⁵⁵ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 144.

⁵⁶ Alm, *Statens rolle*, 2000.

⁵⁷ Næss, *Trolldomsprosessene i Norge*, (1982).

⁵⁸ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne* (1994), 57.

witch is emphasised by among other Louise Nyholm Kallestrup, who also includes in her definition participation in the witches' Sabbath and the conscious intention of using magic for charming.⁵⁹ This definition of diabolical witchcraft was similar within the Catholic church; the witch had consciously worshipped the Devil and renounced her Christian faith and should consequently be sentenced.⁶⁰

The court records, which are my main focus of research, reveal only to a modest degree how far the state influenced witchcraft trials. In the analyses below, I will show that the state did in fact play an important role. In the documents, the role of the state is reflected in an overall jurisdiction responsible for the passing of laws and their enforcement.

1.4.3 The local courts

The role of the local courts is important, as the majority of witchcraft trials were local trials in both regions. The proportion of local trials linked to panics, torture and execution rate will be studied in the quantitative analyses. The practice of local courts will be studied in detail in the close-readings of records. The potential of local courts to act on their own, thus reflecting the interaction between central and local courts, is one of the perspectives treated in Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen's publication *Early Modern European Witchcraft. Centres and Peripheries*.⁶¹

In Scotland, the local kirk courts, created after the Reformation of 1560, were often the first to identify a person suspected of witchcraft. Often this person was interrogated by the kirk session to obtain a confession. This confession was then used to apply to the privy council for a commission to try witches. Commissions of justiciary came to dominate the witch-hunt after 1590. The high percentage of witchcraft trials held at local courts reflects this tendency. Levack argues that the lack of control from central legal authorities is clear in Scotland, a tendency that will also be seen in Europe in general: 'A final precondition of the great European witch-hunt was the ability of local courts and subordinate tribunals to operate with a certain amount of independence from central political and judicial control'.⁶² In Scotland, the first steps to initiate a trial were taken in the local communities. A lot of dittays were produced during questioning in the kirk sessions or in presbyteries, often under torture. The members of the appointed commissions were men from the local communities. The trials

⁵⁹ Kallestrup, L. H., *Trolldomsforfølgelser og trolldomstro: En komparasjon af det posttridentine Italien og det lutherske protestantiske Danmark i det 16 og 17. århundrede* (University of Aalborg, Ph-D. thesis, 2007) 59.

⁶⁰ Kallestrup, L. H., 'Maleficium o "abuso di sacramento"?' , *Dansk Historisk Tidsskrift*, cii, no. 2 (2002), 282–305.

⁶¹ Oxford, 1990.

⁶² Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 93.

were held in the local communities. There are thus several arguments supporting Levack's position that subordinate tribunals operated with a certain amount of independence from central control.

In my opinion the involvement of the privy council counts for a certain degree of activity from the central authorities in Scottish witchcraft cases, but the fact that the cases started and the panics arose in the local communities points to important factors related to the local clerical and secular authorities. The fact that most of the witchcraft trials were held in local courts – implying interrogation under torture – also demonstrates that local courts operated quite freely in witchcraft cases. In these courts the local legal officials would decide the procedures during the trial: the witnesses brought before the court, the interrogation in court, and the potential use of torture. The panics arose in local courts. The assize would decide on verdict. The judges would pass the sentence, and thus set the rate of execution. Therefore the local legal authorities had a lot of influence on the development and conclusion of a trial.

Even if Norway-Denmark was one kingdom during the seventeenth century, Norwegian laws continued to be enforced throughout the period of union. Still, judicial officials in Finnmark were often educated in Copenhagen and might be influenced by Danish laws.⁶³ In Finnmark the main judicial officers were the district governor, the magistrate, the bailiff and the Court of Appeal Judge.⁶⁴ Jørn Øyrehagen Sunde argues that there was a transition from a legal order to a legal system at the end of the fourteenth century, a development of the legal field governed by the state through borrowings from the rest of western Europe. During this transition magic became legally relevant, which was a precondition for the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century witchcraft persecution.⁶⁵ Sunde maintains that legal practice in seventeenth-century Finnmark should be considered within a continental context. An important condition to bear in mind is that the Finnmark witchcraft trials were to a large extent conducted along the lines of inquisitorial trials, trials in which the judge was the one introducing the case and also the one who searched for proofs.⁶⁶ The water ordeal was frequently used during the witchcraft trials in Finnmark. Within contemporary jurisdiction, when there was a rumour that anybody had committed a serious crime, such as murder, the rumour was considered equal to an accusation. Witchcraft was considered to be

⁶³ See P. J. Jørgensen's *Dansk strafferet fra Reformationen til Danske Lov* (København, 2007); Andersen, B., *'Danske Lov' 1683* (København, 2003).

⁶⁴ Sunde, *Speculum legale*; Næss, H. E. (ed.), *For rett og rettferdighet i 400 år* (Oslo, 1991); Falkanger, A. T., *Lagmann og lagting i Hålogaland gjennom 1000 år* (Oslo, 2007).

⁶⁵ Sunde, *Speculum legale*, 183–4.

⁶⁶ Knut Robberstad, *Retts saga*, I (Oslo, 1976), 78.

such a serious crime. In fact, most of the panics consisted of denunciation trials – where the case was started without accusations and without complaints – mentioned by Knut Robberstad as arising from denunciations of accomplices given in confessions during interrogation.⁶⁷ Similar to Scotland, there was a jury deciding on verdict. It is important for the analyses of witchcraft trials that Finnmark as well as Scotland had mixed systems of criminal procedure in which some Roman elements were received and others rejected. On one hand the use of the water ordeal and the use of juries give evidence for the persistence of medieval accusatorial justice in Finnmark, likewise the use of juries in Scotland. On the other hand both Finnmark and Scotland adopted some features, but not all, of a mature inquisitorial system. The adoption of inquisitorial features in Scotland, introduced by an act of 1587, is emphasised by Levack: ‘Scotland clearly did not adopt all the features of inquisitorial procedure; trial by jury was maintained, and many cases were still initiated by accusation from private parties. But this new approach to prosecuting harm marked a significant modification of accusatorial procedure’.⁶⁸ This procedural similarity in Scotland and Finnmark probably contributed to a very high rate of execution during the witchcraft trials in both areas.

Pressure from the local communities to execute witches was tremendous, both among local judicial officials and among merchants from Bergen living in the area who apparently feared the witches’ power because it might threaten their ships and their trade. Thus there was a unified pressure from local and central legal representatives, in addition to pressure from individuals with socio-economical influence in the community, to initiate and continue witchcraft trials in Finnmark.

The quantitative as well as the qualitative analyses will throw light on the legal aspect, as the court is in fact the major foundation as well as the context for most of my primary sources. This will appear in the quantitative analyses, for example in the frequency of central and mixed central-local trials throughout the period of witch-hunt, in the relative rates of execution in central and mixed central-local courts compared with local courts, and in the relative use of torture in central and mixed central-local courts. In the qualitative analyses the role of the state will come to the fore mainly through the ‘Voice of the law’: the wording of the law and the discourse of legal officials. The court records give an account of what happened during the trials and will give first-hand evidence for the interaction between central and local legal authorities reflected in the trial documents.

⁶⁷ Robberstad, *Retts saga* I, 78.

⁶⁸ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 20.

An important topic related to the confessions in witchcraft cases is the use of torture. Levack explains the intensive witch-hunt in Scotland by use of torture in Scottish courts, among other factors.⁶⁹ He has also focused on torture as a means of obtaining confessions in witchcraft cases.⁷⁰ Levack states that torture was used frequently in Scottish criminal cases during the second half of the seventeenth century, and gives several examples of extensive judicial torture during the 1650s and early 1660s. The privy council had to intervene to stop judicial torture in witchcraft cases.⁷¹ In 1708, torture in Scotland was prohibited by an Act of the British Parliament. In Finnmark too, severe torture was used during witchcraft trials, certainly decisive for the bulk of confessions. In Denmark-Norway, torture was forbidden before sentence was passed.⁷² The water ordeal was not seen as torture. It was prohibited in Denmark-Norway in the 1660s.⁷³

1.4.4 The role of the church

Scotland and Finnmark were both post-Reformation areas in the seventeenth century: in Norway the Reformation occurred in 1537, one year after Denmark, while the Scottish Reformation began in 1560. In the post-Reformation era Christianity had become a political ideology in the sense that a degree of education was required for its content to be absorbed. Common people were effectively Christianised for the first time. The crucial factors with regard to the European witch prosecutions were, according to Christina Larnier, ‘the rise of nation states and the development of a personal religion among the peasantry’.⁷⁴ These points cover Larnier’s interpretation of the Scottish witch-hunt, emphasised in the title of her study *Enemies of God*. It was necessary to the governing elite that the individual subjects of the kingdom adhered to the correct version of Christianity. In this way the legitimacy of the regime was demonstrated. This interpretation has been supported by many witchcraft scholars, as it is based on several of the specific time-limited factors in the historical setting of seventeenth-century witchcraft persecution and offers a convincingly logical chain of reasoning.

⁶⁹ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 21–4.

⁷⁰ Levack, B. P., ‘Judicial Torture in Scotland during the Age of Mackenzie’, *SS Miscellany* iv (Edinburgh, 2002), 49, 185–98.

⁷¹ In authorising the trial of Margareth Guthrie in 1664, the council found it necessary to specify that her confession should be voluntary. In 1669 the Aberdeen burgh council openly admitted that torturing the accused had been the ordinary practice in witchcraft cases.

⁷² Articles 18–19 in Koldingske recess (1588).

⁷³ The water ordeal was for the first time rejected in Finnmark in 1653, by the Court Appeal Judge, cf. Sunde, *Speculum legale*, 188.

⁷⁴ Larnier, ‘When is’, 54.

The notion of the Devil as portrayed in demonological books crept into religious scriptures and church preaching. In Scotland, post-Reformation bibles manifested the official policy and carried the stamp of what the state legitimised. In Scotland, the Geneva Bible of 1560 and the authorised version of 1611 have slightly different versions of Deuteronomy, chapter 18:10-11 and of Leviticus, chapter 20:27, some of the most cited texts with regard to sorcery and witchcraft, which will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 4.⁷⁵ The role of the state with regard to witch-hunting can be seen through the involvement of bishops, who were ‘central government’s agents in the locality’,⁷⁶ the informal encouragement of witch-hunting through networks of general assemblies of the church, and the presbyteries’ involvement in witch-hunting. In Scotland the kirk frequently took the first step to interrogate a person suspected of witchcraft to make her or him confess.

In Denmark-Norway the influence of the state on matters related to witchcraft might be seen similarly with regard to the consolidation of Lutheranism in the realm. There was a centralised effort to standardize religious belief, as mentioned by Kallestrup.⁷⁷ Through formulations in post-Reformation bibles and through religious scriptures promoted for use in churches, the state had a firm hand with the preaching of the church on the topic of witches.⁷⁸ Even if Finnmark was at the absolute periphery of the kingdom, religious literature written by outstanding Danish theologians was in use in the churches there.⁷⁹ In Denmark-Norway, the choice of correct doctrines from these theologians was of importance when ordinances were taken into official use. These played an important role for church preaching throughout the kingdom. The existence of Danish sermon books by theologians like Niels Hemmingsen, Jesper Brochmand and Poul Andersen Medelby in the churches of Finnmark is documented.⁸⁰ The same is true of psalm books by Hans Tommesen and Thomas Kingo. So there is no doubt that religious literature from Denmark found its way to the far north. This means that through the church the common people learned about personal responsibility as the basis for a godly pact and the same as the basis for a pact with the Devil. The first editions of post-Reformation Bibles may indicate attitudes to witchcraft according to specific formulations in question.⁸¹

⁷⁵ Another important Biblical reference with regard to witchcraft is Exodus 22:18, ‘Thou shalt not suffre a witche to liue’, ref. Geneva Bible (1560).

⁷⁶ Goodare, *Scottish witch-hunt in context*, 132.

⁷⁷ Kallestrup, L. N., *Trolldomsforfølgelser og trolldomstro: En komparasjon af det posttridentine Italien og det luthersk protestantiske Danmark i det 16. og 17. århundrede* (Aalborg University, Ph.D. thesis, 2007), 293.

⁷⁸ Grell, O. P., (ed.), *The Scandinavian Reformation* (Cambridge, 1995), 114–43.

⁷⁹ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne*, (1994), 60.

⁸⁰ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne* (1994), 60.

⁸¹ Grell, *The Scandinavian*, 129.

In Finnmark the situation was different from that in Scotland with regard to the church's interference in pre-trial witchcraft cases. The church itself did not act to take the initiative in interrogation. However, the possible participation of the minister during the interrogation of suspected witches will have to be examined in the sources, as well as the minister's role in preparing those who were sentenced to death.

For questions related to the church, the qualitative analyses in particular will offer interesting interpretations, as the voice of the law as well as the voice of the accused person during confession will reveal to what extent religious post-Reformation notions were reflected in the legal and the personal discourse.

1.4.5 Neighbourhood disputes

The role of the local community and the social setting of witchcraft accusations have been considered important since the influential studies of Keith Thomas and Alan Macfarlane in the early 1970s. A more recent study inspired by sociology and anthropology is Robin Briggs's *Witches & Neighbours*.⁸² Questions related to the local community and the social sphere are in focus: the social position of women in the communities, women's quarrels and the growth of witchcraft reputations over time. With reference to a specific case in his sources, Briggs says, 'here again the accusations and confrontations seem to have occurred between women, with negligible male input before the trial itself'.⁸³ Briggs is arguing that aggression and competitiveness by women were primarily expressed in relation to other women; 'direct quarrels between men and women were rather less common, outside the family itself'.⁸⁴ The predominance of women in neighbourhood disputes in Scotland tends to support interpretations of a community as 'feminine society', as Briggs puts it, where women more often had conflicts with other women than with men. This topic is also discussed by Julian Goodare in his article on women and the witch-hunt in Scotland mentioned above and by Lauren Martin in an article about women's role in society related to Scottish witchcraft trials. Martin concludes, 'The demonic pact and local quarrels demonstrate a profound unease about women in marriage, work and community relations'.⁸⁵ She maintains that witch-hunting was partly grounded on everyday relations and practices, partly an expression of mass panic and religious fanaticism. I think it is important to bring in the role of women and a discussion of

⁸² Oxford, 2002.

⁸³ Briggs, R., *Witches*, 231.

⁸⁴ Briggs, R., *Witches*, 233.

⁸⁵ Martin, L., 'Witchcraft, quarrels and women's work' in J. Goodare (ed.), *Scottish witch-hunt in context*, 89.

how they functioned in communities. But I think it is equally important to bear in mind when discussing neighbourhood disputes the fact that these disputes were brought before the court as crimes. This could never have happened unless everyday conflicts were exploited within a legal framework which used such disputes as a means of pressing serious accusations. When it comes to women's role in society, Raisa Maria Toiva has pointed out that 'the grounds on which women create their identities – profession, motherhood and sexuality – were problematic'.⁸⁶ They all bore a risk of failure, but they also might create status. Toivo emphasises that a good deal of the problematics related to women had a corresponding problematic in the lives of men, a fact that should be born in mind with regard to neighbourhood conflicts.

In the qualitative analyses, my intention is to indicate how socio-economic relations created tension in communities and increased opportunities for witchcraft persecution. Through close-reading, the material from Scotland might give an impression of the social context in which witchcraft trials took place. The material from Finnmark in particular shows that pressure arising from socio-economic tension in the community influenced the witch-hunt. Conflicts of socio-economic origin were often given by the accused person as motives for casting spells. In Finnmark the local economy was founded on dependency of the Bergen merchants, which resulted in long-term debts and harsh living conditions, as emphasised also by Einar Niemi.⁸⁷

1.4.6 The spoken word

Common people in the seventeenth century lived in oral communities. Only a few individuals could read and write. An oral discourse differs in many ways from a written one and leads to the development of certain structural features in order to help the remembrance and retelling of stories, as pointed out by Walter J. Ong.⁸⁸ Ong calls the orality of a culture totally untouched by any knowledge of print 'primary orality', in contrast to the 'secondary orality' of the present day.⁸⁹ The culture of seventeenth-century peasants was one of 'primary orality'. Some of these structural devices are found in the confessions of witchcraft trials, indicating that the confessions were influenced by the oral field, in formal structures as well as in content. The same was true of the testimonies of witnesses. This situation influenced the witchcraft trials, in that the entire discourse of the witnesses and the accused persons in the

⁸⁶ Toivo, 'Women at Stake', 199.

⁸⁷ Niemi, E., *Vadsøs historie*, i, (Vadsø, 1983), 224.

⁸⁸ *Orality and Literacy. The Technologizing of the Word* (London, 1988).

⁸⁹ Ong, *Technologizing*, 11.

courtroom was an oral discourse. The oral dimension is important for our understanding of witchcraft confessions. Orally transmitted news based on court records has been studied by Adam Fox, demonstrating that among those at the lower levels of society in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England, news spread rapidly within certain networks of communication.⁹⁰ I will bear this approach in mind during close-readings of source material in order to find indications for confessions as the result of demonological 'news' spread in the local community. The confessions were often fatal for the result of a witchcraft trial. Probably the accused person was familiar with demonological ideas before they entered the court-room. Thus the spoken word is an important factor to bear in mind when witchcraft trials are interpreted. An important question to consider is whether there were networks among women liable to spread demonological 'news', and whether this could have affected confessions and denunciations and thus be reflected in the court records. My assumption is that in an early phase of the witch-hunt, demonological ideas circulated in the communities in question and were fused with already-known popular narratives. When imprisoned and interrogated during witchcraft trials the accused individuals retold the narratives they had heard about the Devil, the sabbath and the pact. It is likely that these stories in particular were passed on among women, as women were often part of a female working and social community.

The confessions in witchcraft cases are precious historical documents, as they give access to oral demonological narratives known among common people. Orally transmitted narratives were very rarely taken down in writing during the seventeenth century; most often these stories lived their lives in a wholly oral setting. The reason why we have these demonological narratives preserved today is that they found their way into the kirk sessions and the courtrooms, where they were written down as proof of a 'crime' – often to be read aloud for an audience as part of judicial proceedings.

A few studies have appeared focusing on historical documents as narratives.⁹¹ A study by Olav Solberg shows that historical documents about murder could be studied as narratives containing literary qualities.⁹² Petter Aaslestad has written a study based on patients' journals from a psychiatric hospital, using a synchronic approach to say something about prevailing opinions during different periods of treatment in medical history.⁹³ Alison Rowland's study of

⁹⁰ Fox, A., 'Rumour, News and Popular Political Opinion in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England', *The Historical Journal*, 11:3 (1997), 597–620.

⁹¹ Willumsen, L. H., 'Narratologi som tekstanalytisk metode', in M. Brekke (ed.) *Å begripe teksten* (Kristiansand, 2006), 39–72.

⁹² Solberg, O., *Forteljinger om drap – kriminalhistorier frå seinmellomalderen* (Oslo, 2003).

⁹³ Aaslestad, P., *Pasienten som tekst* (Oslo, 1997).

German witchcraft trials also pays attention to the narrative aspect.⁹⁴ Another study focused on historical documents as narratives is Natlie Zemon Davis's, in which she argues for the method she uses in her study of French pardon tales from the sixteenth century.⁹⁵ She focuses on the interests held by narrator as well as audience in the storytelling event, and she emphasises the importance of a cultural framework where interpretation is concerned. She also keeps her eye open for a more structural approach: 'But I will also be conceiving of "structures" existing prior to that event in the minds of the sixteenth-century participants: possible story lines determined by the constraints of the law and approaches to narrative learned in past listening to and telling of stories derived from other cultural constructions'.⁹⁶ I think this is an important point with regard to the opportunities for demonological ideas to take hold within the oral world of the community.

A study focusing on the transition from oral to written narratives is made by M. T. Clanchy.⁹⁷ He mentions the strong foothold of the narrator in thirteenth-century legal procedures in England. The narrator was a professional teller of tales in the vernacular, 'but his tales were legal pleadings and not romances in the modern sense'.⁹⁸ He made formal claims and pleadings on the litigant's behalf. 'The narrator was a layman, expert in oral pleadings, whereas the attorney was often a cleric and expert in written ones'.⁹⁹ The two functions remained distinct. The narrator spoke on the behalf of the litigant, and was thus an extension of the latter's faculty of speech, but he was not appointed 'to win or lose', as the attorney was. The function of the narrator in older legal procedure is interesting to bear in mind when working with narratology within a legal context, as the old 'legal' narrator left his stamp upon the legal proceedings just as a scribe did in seventeenth-century written legal documents. Clanchy emphasises that a long time after the art of writing documents had begun to be practised, the emphasis on hearing remained strong. This did not mean that the contents stemmed directly from oral tradition, 'but that reading continued to be conceived in terms of hearing rather than seeing'.¹⁰⁰ Even if Clanchy's material is from an earlier period than the seventeenth century, the situation to a certain extent is the same as those in seventeenth-century Scotland and Finnmark.

⁹⁴ Rowlands, A., *Witchcraft narratives in Germany: Rothenburg, 1561-1652* (Manchester, 2003).

⁹⁵ Davis, N. Z., *Fiction in the Archives. Pardon Tales and their Tellers in Sixteenth Century France* (Cambridge, 1987).

⁹⁶ Davis, *Fiction in the Archives*, 4.

⁹⁷ *From memory to written record. England 1066-1307* (Oxford, 1993).

⁹⁸ Clanchy, *From memory*, 274.

⁹⁹ Clanchy, *From memory*, 274.

¹⁰⁰ Clanchy, *From memory*, 268.

The spoken word in itself is not a topic discussed in my thesis. However, it forms the basis for discussing witchcraft belief related to orality and the qualitative analyses will demonstrate how the functioning of the spoken word appears in the source material and affects the outcome of the trial.

1.4.7 Folk belief

The meeting between popular belief and more learned ideas is a difficult area to deal with because of the lack of sources for the seventeenth century. The idea that popular beliefs were important in European witchcraft cases has been discussed for several decades, for instance by Richard Kieckhefer, Keith Thomas and Carlo Ginzburg.¹⁰¹ Traditional belief and witchcraft as they relate to Scotland have recently been discussed fruitfully by Julian Goodare and Joyce Miller.¹⁰² For my study it is natural to look at the confessions as documents which could show the mentality of the peasantry. This means my object of research is the court records and my study is based on analyses of these documents. The distinction between the extent to which the confessions are remnants of old folk belief, or more recent 'news' taken on board by the accused through oral transmission, is in my opinion a very difficult one. I will therefore restrict my discussion to findings in the legal documents. This said, it should be pointed out that both Scotland and Finnmark are areas with rich folk traditions and with ethnic minority groups for whom narratives related to another world are documented at a later stage, from the nineteenth century onwards.

In Scotland, belief in fairies and popular belief in magic related to witchcraft confessions has been emphasised by Lizanne Henderson, Edward Cowan, Joyce Miller and Alaric Hall.¹⁰³ The second sight of the Highlanders has been discussed as another manifestation of the belief in another world.¹⁰⁴ This belief would fit in easily with the notion of witches' metamorphoses and flights to remote Sabbath places.¹⁰⁵ For the Finnmark area, ideas of the superstitious north are especially connected to the Sami people, who had a reputation for sorcery throughout Europe.¹⁰⁶ The challenge for me when interpreting court records with the intention of finding the voice of the peasants will be to draw a distinction between old traditional folk belief and recently imposed demonological ideas. The

¹⁰¹ Kieckhefer, R., *European Witch Trials* (London, 1976); Thomas, K., *Religion and the decline of magic* (New York, 1971); Ginzburg, C., *Ecstasies: deciphering the Witches' Sabbath* (New York, 2001).

¹⁰² Goodare, J., 'Scottish Witchcraft in its European Context', in Goodare et al. (eds.), *Witchcraft and Belief*, 26–50; Miller, J., 'Men in Black: Appearances of the Devil in Early Modern Scottish Witchcraft Discourse', in Goodare et al. (eds.), *Witchcraft and Belief*, 144–65.

¹⁰³ Henderson, L. and Cowan, E. B., *Scottish Fairy Belief* (East Linton, 2004); Miller, *Cantrips and Carlins*.

¹⁰⁴ Hunter, M., 'The Discovery of Second Sight in Late 17th century Scotland', *History today* (2001), 48–53.

¹⁰⁵ Black, R., Introduction to Campbell, *The Gaelic Otherworld* (Edinburgh, 2005).

¹⁰⁶ Pollan, *Samiske beretninger*, 40–72.

confessions are most likely a fusion between these spheres of ideas, brought to the fore during interrogation by leading questions. The accusations and testimonies of witnesses may express ideas about what harm witches were able to do, and they are also expressions of traditional patterns of belief, a topic discussed by e.g. Julian Goodare.¹⁰⁷ In this thesis I stick to the text itself and what is written down in the document, thus restricting my field of reference to what has been written down as part of the trial.

1.4.8 The superstitious north

A particular ethnic situation characterises both Scotland and Finnmark. Two different ethnic groups, a majority group and a minority group speaking another language, live side by side in both regions. In Scotland the Highlanders speak Gaelic, while in Finnmark the Sami people speak Sami. Both these groups were supposed to be very superstitious and powerful in the art of magic, something which created fear among people living geographically further south. King James' *Demonology* mentions that the Devil 'commonly counterfeits God among the ethnics' (pagans). The same book mentions Lapland, Finland, Orkney and Shetland as parts of the world 'where the devil findes greatest ignorance and barbaritie'.¹⁰⁸ Likewise Olaus Magnus' history book (1555) mentions the Sami as well versed in the art of magic.¹⁰⁹ Magnus' book was the only description of the Nordic peoples at that time, and therefore it was influential among learned European people. He stresses the Samis's performance of wind magic and shamanism, which includes the use of the rune drum and entering into another world through trance. In addition he suggests that the Devil is located in the North, thus giving an impression of the North as a mysterious and exotic place.¹¹⁰ But Olaus Magnus' s gaze was from outside; he had never been to the north himself, but based his description on other sources. Thus this image of the north of Norway was an image portrayed by an outsider – an exotic impression of the northern areas which was of interest to a reading European audience. Magnus was also cartograf, and a similar portrayal of the northern areas as mysterious and dangerous comes to the fore in his famous map *Carta Marina* (1538).

If ideas about the superstitious north intensified the witch-hunt in Scotland or Finnmark, this might have to do with the understanding of witch-hunters (both centrally and locally placed) that the areas in question were more likely to be inhabited by witches than

¹⁰⁷ Goodare, 'Scottish Witchcraft in its European Context', 28.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Normand and Roberts (eds.), *Witchcraft*, 414 (*Daemonologie*, Book 3, ch. 3); 419 (*Daemonologie*, Book 3, ch. 5).

¹⁰⁹ Normand and Roberts, *Witchcraft*, 414.

¹¹⁰ *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus* (Roma, 1555), *Historia om de nordiska folken* (Malmö, 1982).

were other areas. If the sources themselves indicate such attitudes on the part of the witch-hunters, it could be argued that attitudes grounded in the states' political ambitions to cleanse these countries of witches, especially in liable areas, may have contributed to intensifying the witch-hunt in these areas. The 'superstitious north' ideas may have affected witch-hunting in the two areas by strengthening the alertness on the part of the authorities towards witches to be found there. However, whether this led to increased witch-hunts or not was dependant upon several other factors.

1.4.9 The personal factor

Witchcraft trials arose in some areas and not in others. So far no single witchcraft analysis or study has managed to come to terms with this enigma. Even neighbouring communities might have completely different developments with regard to witchcraft persecution, as can be seen from trials in central Europe.¹¹¹ So the basic questions are, what kind of triggering factors originated the witchcraft trials, and what kind of sustaining factors kept the trials alive during the period of the witch-hunt? All the above-mentioned factors are important, but they are not in themselves enough to explain why Scotland and Finnmark suffered severe witch-hunts (possibly with the exception of the particular ethnic conditions in the two areas) because these factors would be found in places where witchcraft persecution took place as well as where witch-hunt did not occur. So first we have to look for a triggering factor that originated the witch-hunt. Secondly, we have to look for a sustaining factor able to wake the witch-hunt into life after a dormant period with few trials. In both these cases I think the personal factor is the decisive one. There must be one or several individuals in positions which enable him or them to start the witch-hunt and similarly for the continuation of trials. My hypothesis is based on the understanding that individuals were important for the spread of demonological ideas in Scotland and Finnmark, thus influencing the outbreak and the continuation of the witch-hunt.

1.4.10 The Scottish connection

The last point related to my hypothesis is a further development of the 'personal factor' discussed above. I will argue there was a direct link between the Scottish and the Finnmark

¹¹¹ Volmer, R., 'Hexenjagd im Territorium der Reichsabtei St Maximin vor Trier', in Reichert, W., Minn, G. and Voltmer, R., (eds.), *Quellen zur Geschichte des Rhein-Maas-Raumes* (Trier, 2006), 227–71; Voltmer, R., 'Hexenverfolgungen im Maas-Rhein-Mosel-Raum', in Irsigler, F., (ed.), *Beziehungen, Begegnungen und Konflikte in einem europäischen Kernraum von der Spätantike bis zum 19. Jahrhundert* (Trier, 2006), 153–187; Rummel, W. and Voltmer, R., *Hexen und Hexenverfolgung in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Darmstadt, 2008), 34–57, 74–83.

witchcraft trials – a link I will call ‘the Scottish connection’.¹¹² The first real outburst of witchcraft panics in Finnmark came in the 1620s. John Cunningham was installed as district governor of Vardøhus in 1619. He was a Scotsman recommended by the Scottish king – ‘by our request and recommendation’ – to serve the Danish king in the early 1600s.¹¹³

Cunningham led several naval expeditions, two to Greenland 1605 and 1606, when Mount Cunningham, Cunningham’s Fjord and Christian IV’s Fjord got their names.¹¹⁴ He also led expeditions to Spitsbergen in 1615 and to the Faeroese islands in 1616. He was known to be a decisive and strong leader. His appointment as the king’s servant in the north had to do with the king’s ambitions to strengthen the northern border areas, to lead a more aggressive fiscal policy with stricter taxation, and to extend Vardøhus Castle.¹¹⁵ There were few restrictions on Cunningham in his office in Finnmark, which gave him a free hand in his dealing with witchcraft trials. He probably knew King James’ *Demonology* and about the 1597 panic in Fife, which was close to his home place, West Barns in Fife.

1.5 Methodology

In my thesis I follow a model for comparative studies presented by George Z. F. Bereday, consisting of the main elements: description, interpretation, juxtaposition and comparison.¹¹⁶ The source material will undergo two kinds of analysis: a quantitative data-based analysis, and a qualitative analysis emphasizing ideological developments and attitudes. The quantitative statistical analyses of the sources will be presented in two chapters, one for Scotland and one for Finnmark. The function of these two chapters within the context of the thesis is twofold. Firstly, the statistical analyses will provide factual information about central topics related to the witch-hunt in Scotland and Finnmark and thus give a background for the qualitative analyses that follow. Secondly, the range of topics focused on in the quantitative analyses will indicate areas of interest for comparison between witchcraft trials in Scotland and Finnmark. The topics treated statistically are extracted from my hypothesis and will cover points which also will be analysed qualitatively.

¹¹² Willumsen, *Trollkvinne* (1984), 73.

¹¹³ Meldrum, R. M., (ed.), *Letters from James I to Christian IV, 1603-1625* (Washington, 1977), 41.

¹¹⁴ Egede, H., *Grønlands Nye Perlustration eller Naturel-Historie* (Copenhagen, 1742); *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto, 1966), i, 243.

¹¹⁵ Hagen, H., ‘At the Edge of Civilisation. John Cunningham, lensmann of Finnmark 1619–51’, in A. Mackillop and S. Murdoch (eds.), *Military Governors and Imperial Frontiers c. 1600–1800* (Leiden, 2003), 30.

¹¹⁶ Bereday, G. Z. F., *Comparative Method in Education* (New York, 1964), 28.

For the quantitative analysis covering Scotland I have used data from the SSW, where information from a large spectrum of sources has been categorised. For analysis of the Norwegian material I have extracted data from my own transcription of court records from witchcraft trials in northern Norway. Statistical tests of relative and absolute frequencies can reveal correlations and relationships that may not be obvious from casual observation. Most statistical tests are based on studies of variation from expected values, and based on formal probability theory.

Use of statistical tests in the social sciences, and even more in humanities subjects such as history, are less frequent than in the sciences. In the social sciences applying statistical tests is more problematic than in, for instance, biology. Observations may not be continuous, as in weight, height and temperature, but may be discrete or even dichotomous, as in 'yes' or 'no'; 'male' or 'female'. Also it is impossible to conduct controlled experiments. Rather the researcher is confined to observing, sometimes inaccurately, what has happened in the past and to drawing conclusions from such observations. In history, the data may have been collected for quite different purposes from that of the study in which it is used. The data used in this study, historical source materials, are legal and clerical documents not organized for the purpose of later quantitative studies. From these texts categories have to be constructed and given a form that renders the data and constructed variables feasible for formal, quantitative, statistical analysis. The data, being to a large extent written text, must be coded into variables and categories. This is a translation process, and as such may leave out important information and meaning present in the original text, the primary data source, and may also introduce potential errors. The problems here are general problems of scientific research, and are usually solved by documenting *both* the original sources *and* the interpretation and condition. Transparency and adherence to a generally accepted code of conduct among scholars are necessary conditions for research.

Another issue that often distinguishes quantitative research in the humanities and the social sciences from that of 'hard' sciences is the possibility of drawing conclusions from cause to effect. Sometimes the influence of cause to effect may be observed by looking at the time of the observations. Cause should occur before or at least simultaneously with the effect, not later. But this is not always true when we observe human activity. Human beings normally form expectations of what has not yet happened and adjust their present activities to what may happen in the future. People invest in stocks if they expect prices to increase, even if prices have fallen in the past. People may restrain themselves from an activity they would otherwise do if they expect punishment after the event. One could argue that there is a causal and

temporal connection between expectation and action. Partly due to the considerations stated above, I will be cautious in drawing causal inference in this study.

However, a related, but more open type of analysis will be to study correlations and occurrences of abnormal frequencies. What are 'abnormal frequencies'? This can only be answered by first defining what is normal. Relative to this study, I alternate by defining normal by two procedures: either in the obvious way by looking at normal frequencies in a population, or by looking at specific conditions valid for the samples used in the study. We know that currently there are about as many women as men in any society, and we assume this was also the case in the centuries studied here, unless we know otherwise. This is general information about the composition of gender in a population. When we find a different composition in the sample of witchcraft trials, we consider the higher frequency of women an abnormal situation.

On the other hand, what happens to people after being accused may be seen as 'treatment', as in a controlled experiment. People in witchcraft trials are 'treated' when brought before the court and the treatment may lead to a sentence. Then we ask the following question: given two or more groups brought before a court, are the relative frequencies of the outcomes 'abnormal frequencies'? This can be tested statistically if we assume that the relative frequency before the treatment in the sample should be equal to the frequency after treatment, i.e. the frequency of the sentences.

In formal statistical tests we compare the outcome of a 'treatment' with the standard null-hypothesis, which means that the treatment has no effect. The consequence of the standard null-hypothesis is that we should observe the same frequency before and after the treatment. Due to random effects this will almost never be observed precisely. The frequency before and after will be different. But is the difference so great that it can be called 'abnormal'? This type of question can be answered by using probability theory and general assumptions about the statistical distribution of the variables.¹¹⁷

The actual tests used in this thesis are mostly simple non-parametric tests used for discrete variables in one-stage tests. The majority of formal statistical tests are chi-square tests, which are commonly used in social science studies. The testing may be illustrated by a two-by-two table consisting of actual observation in each of the four cells. The observations are compared with the expected frequency in the same cells. Observations close to the expected values result in low calculated chi-square statistics, and greater deviations from expected

¹¹⁷ Hodges, J. L. Jr. and Lehmann, E. L., *Basic Concepts of Probability and Statistics* (San Francisco, 1964), 275–322.

values result in higher chi-square values. High chi-square values mean that there is a low probability that the observations are created by a random process. There is thus a correlation between the variables. A high correlation is necessary, but not sufficient, to establish a cause-and-effect relationship between two variables. The actual test of significance is conducted by comparing the calculated chi-square statistics with pre-calculated critical values taken from statistical tables.¹¹⁸

Strictly speaking a statistical test like the chi-square test tells us only whether we can discount the hypothesis that there is no relationship between the two variables that are tested. A highly significant outcome of the test says that the null-hypothesis of no relationship must be discounted. But it does not tell us which alternative hypothesis is correct. And it does not prove cause-and-effect. A proof must in addition be based on accepted theory and correct logical deductions. For some findings in this thesis I will argue that a high correlation can support my hypothesis of cause-and-effect. Accumulation of support for a hypothesis will eventually lead to the hypothesis becoming accepted as a valid theory or a law (like in physics).

For the qualitative analysis, my study is based on linguistic grounds. I certainly agree with Stuart Clark in emphasising the necessity of beginning with language if one is to make any kind of sense of the witchcraft beliefs of the past.¹¹⁹ I will restrict my qualitative analyses of witchcraft documents to imply the terms in which the documents are expressed. As stated frequently among the ranks of narratologists, for example by Monika Fludernik, the researcher wishes to examine not only *what* a text means, but *how* it means.¹²⁰ However, it should be emphasised that an analysis based on language structures does not deal only with the formal structures of a text; semantics is implied as well. The manner in which a text is expressed is of the greatest importance with regard to the contents conveyed, a knowledge by now generally accepted within academia.¹²¹ My analyses will aim to examine the way in which witchcraft documents are told and how the meaning is expressed through these narrative structures. In addition, the documents will be placed in a historical context and discussed as legal documents, as well as documents displaying mentality history. When analysing historical source material, the principle of text autonomy – making the text in itself the sole object of the analysis – is not satisfactory. As has been argued by Olav Solberg, it is

¹¹⁸ Godske, C. L., *Statistikk i forskning og praksis* (Oslo, 1966), 105–21.

¹¹⁹ Clark, *Thinking with Demons*, 3.

¹²⁰ Fludernik, M., *The fictions of languages and the languages of fiction: the linguistic representation of speech and consciousness* (London, 1993), 13.

¹²¹ Willumsen, 'Narratologi som tekstanalytisk metode', 69.

necessary to go to the context in order to understand the meaning of the text, particularly when working with historical sources.¹²²

As methodology I have chosen a narratological approach. Narratology is based on structuralism's theory of narrative structures.¹²³ With roots going back to Russian formalism of the 1920s, the international breakthrough of French narratology took place in the early 1970s with Gérard Genette's influential study *Discours du récit* [Narrative discourse].¹²⁴ Genette's entire production forms a substantial contribution to the interpretation of narrative texts, fiction as well as non-fiction. In addition to Genette's main work, his other contributions to the field of narratology are 'Frontières du récit' (1966), *Nouveau discours du récit* (1983) and *Fiction et diction* (1991). Genette's theories are central to the theoretical field of narratology and will have an impact on the qualitative analyses performed below. Other contributors to the study of narrative discourse whose works have had bearings on my close-readings of witchcraft documents are Mieke Bal, Dorrit Cohn, Brian McHale, Meir Sternberg, Pierre Vitoux and Monika Fludernik.¹²⁵

Narratology has to do with the study of structures in narrative texts – an exploration of the narrator's function.¹²⁶ The narrator is seen as an absolutely necessary textual device. As Genette puts it: 'Narrative without a narrator, the utterance without an uttering, seems to me pure illusion and, as such, "unfalsifiable"'.¹²⁷ Usually the study of the narrator's voice has been related to fictional texts, but the approach also has great relevance to non-fictional texts, as pointed out by Liv Helene Willumsen.¹²⁸ With regard to court records, the historical documents analysed in this thesis, the scribe is seen as having the same role as the narrator of a fictional text, being the voice which structures and keeps together the whole text. A narratological analysis requires close-reading of the text, in which details may be observed and thus become important to the interpretation. An examination of narrative structures may

¹²² Solberg, *Forteljingar om drap*, 63.

¹²³ Kittang, A., 'Merknader til nokre grunntema i narratologien' in *Sju artiklar om litteraturvitenskap* (Oslo, 2001), 78.

¹²⁴ Gaasland, R., 'Fra narratologiens tidligste år', in E. Arntzen and R. Gaasland (eds.), *Teorismer*, (Tromsø, 1995), 47–9.

¹²⁵ Bal, M., *Narratology. Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* (Toronto, 1997); Cohn, D., *Transparent Minds. Narrative Modes for presenting Consciousness in Fiction* (Princeton, 1983); Cohn, D., *The Distinction of Fiction* (Baltimore, 1999); Mchale, B., 'Free indirect discourse: a survey of recent accounts', *PTL: A Journal for descriptive poetics and theory of literature*, no. 2 (1978); Sternberg, M., 'Ordering the Unordered: Time, Space and Descriptive Coherence', *Yale French Studies*, lxi (1981), 60–88; 'Telling in Time (1): Chronology and Narrative Theory', *Poetics today*, no. 4 (1990), 901–48; Vitoux, P., 'Le jeu de la focalisation', *Poétique*, no. 51 (1982), 359–368; Fludernik, *The fictions of languages*; Fludernik, M., *Towards a 'Natural' Narratology* (London, 1996).

¹²⁶ Aaslestad, *Pasienten*, 7.

¹²⁷ Genette, G., *Narrative Discourse Revisited* (Ithaca, 1988), 101.

¹²⁸ Willumsen, 'Narratologi som tekstanalytisk metode', 39–40.

bring to the fore interpretative elements that would remain hidden in alternative ways of text analysis.¹²⁹

Genette's *Narrative Discourse* is a study developing a narratological methodology through the analysis of a fictional work, Marcel Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*. However, in several others of Genette's books, in particular *Fiction and Diction*, he discusses the boundaries between fictional and non-fictional texts. In English the term for non-fictional prose is not as distinct as in Norwegian, where the word 'sakprosa' is used, a term used almost exclusively in Nordic countries.¹³⁰ Johan Tønnesson has discussed different terms in English for this type of prose. He maintains that a negative definition like 'non-fiction', which literally means 'everything other than fiction', is too superficial. Tønnesson discusses whether the terms 'factual prose' and 'subject-oriented prose' could be used to denote this type of prose, and maintains that the latter of the two is the best, but that neither of these terms catches the history of meaning related to the Norwegian 'sakprosa'.¹³¹ Genette, in addition to the term 'diction', argues for a fruitful use of narratology related to analysis of non-fictional texts – what he calls 'factual narratives'. Stating that 'it is unlikely to exempt us from having to undertake a specific study of factual narrative (...) Such a study would require a large-scale inquiry into discursive practices such as those of *history*, biography, personal diaries, newspaper accounts, police reports, *judicial narratives*' [*My italics*].¹³² Other narratologists discuss in greater detail than Genette the dividing line between fiction and historical accounts, for example Dorrit Cohn in *The Distinction of Fiction* (1999).

Scholars discussing the study of historical sources from a narratological point of view signal that a study of the autonomous text is not sufficient for a full interpretation. Genette emphasises that when studying characteristic features of the discourse of factual narratives, important factors to bear in mind are 'the official status of the text and its reading horizon'.¹³³ This insight is important with regard to my use of narratology as a text-analytical tool related to analyses of witchcraft records. With contemporary historical documents I find that contextualising the original sources is very important when it comes to throwing light on the complex issue in focus – the historical witchcraft trials.

The basic claims for a text to be called a narrative are, firstly, the ordering of events along a linear axis, secondly, the placing of the events within a spatial context and, thirdly,

¹²⁹ Willumsen, 'Narratologi som tekstanalytisk metode', 61–4.

¹³⁰ In Germany 'Sachprosa' is rarely used, Tønnesson, J., *Hva er sakprosa* (Oslo, 2008), 24.

¹³¹ Tønnesson, *Hva er sakprosa*, 24, uses the Norwegian word 'betydningshistorie' for history of meaning.

¹³² Genette, G., *Fiction & Diction* (Ithaca, 1993), 55–6.

¹³³ Genette, *Fiction & Diction*, 57.

causal relations tying the events logically to one another. My narratological approach implies considering the court records compositionally as several minor narratives embedded within a frame narrative, a model used by Olav Solberg in his analysis of documents related to Norwegian murder trials in the later Middle Ages.¹³⁴ The frame narrative as well as the embedded narratives will fulfil the fundamental claims to a narrative text mentioned above. The frame narrative, expressed by the narrator, will represent the official document as such, written down in the court records. Within this major narrative the narrator is in a position to delegate voices to the participants of the trial: the interrogators, the witnesses, the accused and the judges, letting them come to the fore in their own distinctive voices. By keeping these different voices apart, attention is drawn towards the way the text is told and the functioning of a discourse in which different official layers and different individuals are involved. Some of these participants will then tell minor narratives as part of the larger framework, like the witnesses in their testimonies and the accused in their confessions. So the confession is an embedded narrative within the whole court records and – as will be seen in the analyses – a very important narrative with regard to the interpretation of the trial, in which the accused is a narrator in his or her own right. The accused persons had to confess individually in Scotland as well as in Finnmark. In Scotland the suspected person's confession was of great importance in order to get a commission appointed to hold a trial. Therefore individual confessions were often obtained before the formal trial started, and the dittays sent to the privy council. In Finnmark the individual confession was necessary in order for a sentence to be passed. Thus the interrogation before the court had as its aim the accused person's confession. My way of analysing the confessions separately as narratives will give insight into the oral field of belief and notions among common people, and place this part of the court records significantly between the spoken and the written word. The confessions will also be an important source for the understanding of how and to what extent demonological ideas spread among common people throughout the period of the witch-hunt. Altogether a discourse analysis of the different voices to be noted in the witchcraft documents may throw light on different aspects of the trials.

An awakening interest among literary scholars for reading witchcraft documents from a linguistic perspective resulted in several studies during the 1990s and 2000s, among them

¹³⁴ Solberg, *Forteljingar om drap*.

several studies by Marion Gibson and Diane Purkiss.¹³⁵ Gibson argues for ‘closer attention to the structure of the texts at the heart of our understanding of witchcraft’.¹³⁶ I agree with Gibson that several layers of the text are to be found in the witchcraft records and I share her point of view that it is necessary to pay close attention to the structure of the texts. However, I disagree with Gibson in downplaying the influence of the scribe when interpreting court records.¹³⁷

Several witchcraft scholars have brought to the fore diverse theoretical questions in addition to analyses based on comprehensive empirical material, among them Lyndal Roper and Jeanne Favret-Saada.¹³⁸ A major question raised by Lyndal Roper identifies the link between the profession of history and the basic problem of witchcraft ‘belief’: ‘As a profession used to addressing documents for their reliability, it is hard to know how to interpret documents which we do not believe to be factual’.¹³⁹ Roper solves this by using a psycho-analytical approach when interpreting the sources. Jeanne Favret-Saada claims that accounts of the cultural difference between the academic anthropologist and those who ‘believe in’ witchcraft function ‘to construct the believer as the dark other of the academic’.¹⁴⁰ Instead of going further along these lines, I will approach the documents from another angle. In my view, the variety and richness of the sources, not forgetting the legal discourse, the witnesses’ testimonies and the ideological aspects of seventeenth-century witch belief, will be taken better care of by close-readings inspired by narratology in combination with statistical analysis. In my view, the stability of the text cannot be disputed, neither the fact that a text has a meaning. Yet each new interpretation of a document will be original, as the process of interpretation is a subjective one. The interpretation of historical documents will always in the end bear the stamp of the researcher.

In her book *Fiction in the Archives*, Natalie Zemon Davis has some interesting perspectives related to the textual analysis of historical documents:

In my twentieth-century enterprise I have been much helped by what literary specialists have shown us about how narratives are put together, but my historian’s eye will not focus on morphologies of the tale, on production from a universal grammar, or on arrangements of functions, “indices”, and propositions that might be found in any time or any place. Rather I am after evidence of how sixteenth-century

¹³⁵ Purkiss, D, *The Witch in History* (London, 1997); Gibson, M., *Early Modern Witches* (London, 2000), *Reading witchcraft* (London, 1999), *Witchcraft and society in England and America, 1550–1750* (New York, 2003), *Women and witchcraft in popular literature, c.1615–1715* (Aldershot, 2007).

¹³⁶ Gibson, *Reading Witchcraft*, 18–19.

¹³⁷ Gibson, *Reading Witchcraft*, 22.

¹³⁸ Roper, *Witch Craze. Terror and fantasy in Baroque Germany* (New Haven, 2004); Jeanne Favret-Saada, *Deadly Words: Witchcraft in the Bocage* (Cambridge, 1980).

¹³⁹ Roper, *Witch Craze*, 19–23.

¹⁴⁰ Favret-Saada, quoted according to Purkiss, *The Witch in History*, 60.

people told stories (albeit in the special case of the pardon tale), what they thought a good story was, how they accounted for motive, and how through narrative they made sense of the unexpected and built coherence into immediate experience. I want to see how their stories varied according to teller and listener and how the rules for plot in these judicial tales of violence and grace interacted with wider contemporary habits of explanation, description, and evaluation.¹⁴¹

I think the approach suggested by Davis is interesting as method for analysing historical documents, and I would like to include in my methodological approach discourse analyses of court records as well as analyses of accused persons' confessions as narratives. But in addition I want to complement this qualitative approach with a quantitative one, as I am convinced that statistics can tell us a lot about basic tendencies in the source material related to witch-hunt. For both areas the source material, treated statistically, will provide factual conditions and findings valid for the witchcraft trials in total and give more grounded evidence than is achieved by analysing witchcraft trials separately.

Malefice or *maleficium* is in this thesis defined as evil-doing by means of traditional sorcery. I follow Lerner in defining witchcraft and sorcery. Witchcraft is defined by Lerner as 'the generation of supernatural power with or without particular performances and is therefore an umbrella term'. Sorcery is defined by Lerner as 'the use of words and actions to generate supernatural power'.¹⁴² It should be noted that sorcery is an acquired skill, as Levack has pointed out.¹⁴³

1.6 Outline of the thesis

The basic similarities between Scotland and Finnmark analysed from primary witchcraft trial sources create the backbone of this comparative study. The two areas are compared with regard to the ten factors formulated in my hypothesis, section 1.4. These factors in total contain the main questions posed in this thesis and will underlie the various analyses performed in the thesis. These factors will also structure the discussion in the last chapter.

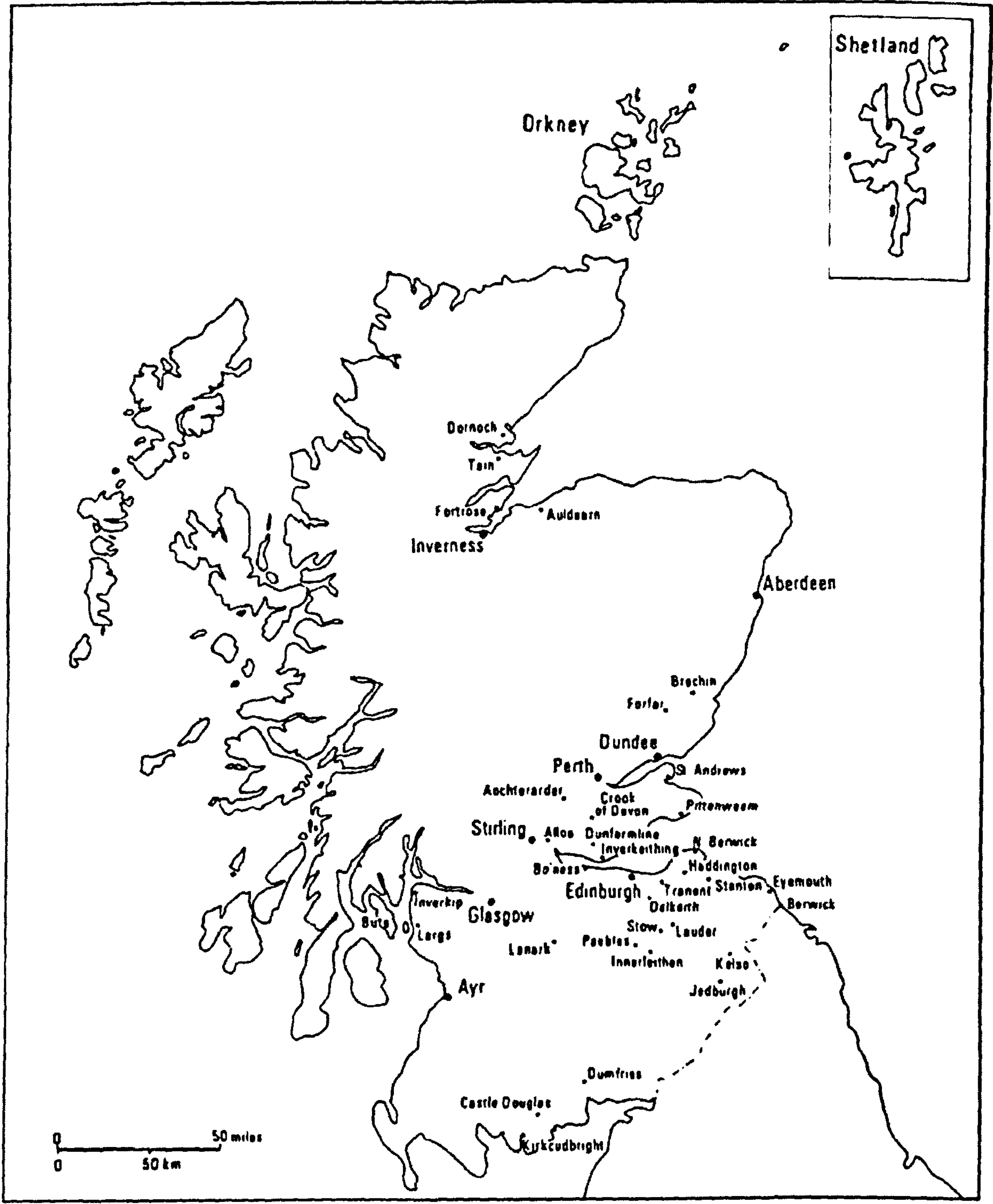
The thesis is structured as follows: Chapters 2 and 3 deal with quantitative analyses of Scotland and respectively Finnmark. Chapters 4–7 contain qualitative analyses based on close-readings of a selection of court records: chapter 4 deals with the Scottish mainland, chapter 5 with Orkney, chapter 6 with Shetland and chapter 7 with Finnmark. The comparative and concluding chapter is number 8. Three appendices are provided, containing detailed tables and figures referred to in chapters 2, 3, 5 and 6. Maps of Scotland, Finnmark, Orkney and Shetland are provided in Figure 1, Figure 7, Figure 12 and Figure 15.

¹⁴¹ Davis, *Fiction in the Archives*, 4.

¹⁴² Lerner, *Enemies*, 9.

¹⁴³ Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 6.

2 Statistics: Scotland



PRINCIPAL PLACES MENTIONED IN TEXT

Figure 1 Map of Scotland

2.1 Data

In this chapter quantitative methods will be used to analyse central issues related to witchcraft trials in Scotland: gender, frequency of witchcraft cases, panic versus non-panic periods, types of trial, verdicts and sentences, torture, the demonological element, neighbourhood disputes and fairy belief. These analyses will substantiate several factors launched in my hypothesis as contributing to the initiation and continuation of the witch-hunt. Gender is an aspect of the witchcraft trials highlighted throughout the thesis. The frequency of witchcraft cases relates on one level to the role of the state with regard to the implementation of demonological notions and persecution activity in the secular as well as the clerical arenas. Various analyses related to types of trial will give information on the interaction between central and local courts as well as the intensity of the witch-hunt, setting forth the consequences of different types of trials. Analyses of verdict, sentence and torture will support a discussion about the severity of the hunt, as torture played an important role in extracting confessions. I will argue that the demonological element is decisive for the foundation of the witch-hunt on a superior ideological level as well as for denunciations and explosive panic periods. Neighbourhood disputes were often the first steps on the road to a witchcraft accusation and should be considered among the causes influencing the hunts. Folk belief might contribute – by means of content or on structural grounds – to the receipt and sustenance of demonological ideas in a community. In total a quantitative approach to these issues will complement the qualitative analyses carried out in later chapters.

This chapter is based on data from Julian Goodare, Lauren Martin, Joyce Miller and Louise Yeoman, ‘The Survey of Scottish Witchcraft’ (SSW).¹⁴⁴ Some of the queries in this chapter have been directly analysed in Windows Office Access, which is the database system used in SSW. Other queries are based on data downloaded from SSW, and analysed in Microsoft Excel.

SSW has a paginated ‘Database Documentation and Description’, to which I refer. The database is organised around named individuals accused of witchcraft. It consists of three levels, each linked to a series of tables. In The Entity Model – Overview, the main components are presented. The first level is called Accused, the second is called Case and the third is called Trial.¹⁴⁵ These three levels will be referred to in connection with the various figures and tables in my text. I present calculations based on a combination of information

¹⁴⁴ www.arts.ed.ac.uk/witches (archived January 2003, accessed February 2007).

¹⁴⁵ SSW, DDD, 12–4.

from tables in SSW. Major findings are presented and discussed in the main text. Supporting documentation and minor findings are placed in the Appendix.

The data registered in SSW is organised in tables given descriptive names. In a table, each row contains one record with information about a specific item and each column contains a field with information about a specific feature. For instance, the main level Accused is linked to the table Accused_family, where the data is organised in fields given names such 'Est_Year_of_Birth'(estimated year of birth), 'Surname', 'Firstname', 'Age'. When I refer to the various fields in SSW I follow the use of underscore and capital letters shown in the examples above.

The different types of source material used in the creation of SSW are listed in Database Documentation and Description.¹⁴⁶ While the number of cases and the number of persons accused amounts to 3413 and 3219 respectively, there are only 307 cases where the verdict and the sentence are known. This is a challenge for statistical treatment of the material.

The data presented in this chapter will be used in the comparison of Scotland and Finnmark in the concluding chapter.

2.2 Gender

In this section I will present briefly some facts about distribution of gender in Scottish witchcraft trials, and relate the findings to the European average. Since gender is a central aspect of several questions posed in relation to witchcraft trials, I find it appropriate to let gender be a recurrent theme for discussion throughout the thesis.

Women were clearly in the majority among the accused in most European countries, as pointed out by several scholars.¹⁴⁷ With regard to the percentage of women and men accused of witchcraft, there seems to be consensus among scholars that between 75% and 85% of persons accused of witchcraft were women.¹⁴⁸ But there are some inconsistencies as to female dominance. In Estonia, Russia, Normandy and Iceland, less than 50% of those accused of witchcraft were women.¹⁴⁹ High percentages of women tend to coincide with intensive witch-hunt in a region, a fact that is underlined by the broad range of articles covering European witchcraft in Golden's *Encyclopaedia of Witchcraft*.

¹⁴⁶ SSW. DDD, 42-52.

¹⁴⁷ Wiesner-Hanks, M., 'Gender' in Golden, *Encyclopedia*, 4 vols., ii, 407; Golden, R. M., 'Satan in Europe: The Geography of Witch Hunts', in B. P. Levack (ed.), *New Perspectives on Witchcraft, Magic and Demonology*, 6 vols., ii: *Witchcraft in Continental Europe* (New York, 2001), 21.

¹⁴⁸ Wiesner-Hanks, 'Gender', 407; Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 141.

¹⁴⁹ Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 142; Rafnsson, M., *The Witch-hunts in Iceland* (Hólmavík, 2003).

The dominance of accused females during the European witch-hunt is indisputable. However, interest in male witches has risen in recent years and studies related to this theme have appeared.¹⁵⁰ Levack points out that there is nothing in the legal definition of a witch that excludes men.¹⁵¹ It follows from the consensus among scholars on the percentage of female witches that there is also an implicit consensus on frequency of male witches: a range from one-fifth to one-quarter among those accused of witchcraft in Europe were men. Julian Goodare says: 'No scholar has yet compiled an overall European figure for the proportion of male witches, but the figures of 20 or 25 per cent commonly quoted as typical would indicate that the Scottish witch-hunt was relatively misogynist'.¹⁵²

Gender	Total	Percent
Female	2702	83.9%
Male	468	14.5%
Unknown Gender	49	1.4%
Total	3219	100%

Table 1 Gender, all persons accused of witchcraft, Scotland (SSW)

The percentages of women and men accused of witchcraft in Scotland as shown in Table 1 above, are respectively 83.9% and 14.5%, and 1.4% with unknown gender.¹⁵³ The figures are based on WDB_Accused in SSW. In that table, accused individuals (i.e. records) are identified by first name (FirstName) and last name (LastName).¹⁵⁴ When combining information from both WDB_Accused and WDB_Case, one finds that 186 records have identical name to at least one other record.¹⁵⁵ If only records with unique names are counted, there are 3026 individuals with different names and of these 2531 women.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁰ Apps, L. and Gow, A., *Male Witches in Early Modern Europe* (Manchester, 2003).

¹⁵¹ Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 141.

¹⁵² Goodare, J., 'Men and the witch-hunt in Scotland', in A. Rowlands, (ed.), *Witchcraft and Masculinities in Early Modern Europe* (forthcoming).

¹⁵³ When linking gender from WDB_Accused to case year taken from WDB_Case, 7 observations from WDB_Accused will be lost. The percent of gender will thus also be slightly changed. See Table 50, Appendix, for a list of gender by year.

¹⁵⁴ According to WDB_Accused, 190 records have identical name of the person mentioned with at least one other record.

¹⁵⁵ WDB_Case has 3413 records. In WDB_Case there is a variable called NamedIndividual. Name is also given, but with a different format to the same information in WDB_Accused. In WDB_Case 186 names occur more than once. When a query combines both WDB_Accused and WDB_Case, one gets 3212 records. In SSW duplication of names has been eliminated, DDD pp. 55–56. The 186 names may be explained as repeated accusations of the same person or several persons with the same name.

¹⁵⁶ I will proceed with 3219 accused persons.

2.3 Frequency of cases over time

2.3.1 General

In central Europe, one of the first hunts took place in Bern in the 1420s, and the last officially sanctioned one in Europe, the trial of Anna Göldi, took place in Switzerland in 1782.¹⁵⁷ For Scotland the registration of witchcraft cases in SSW covers the period 1563–1727.¹⁵⁸ SSW documents a total of 3413 cases; 3399 where the date of the case is known and 14 cases of unknown date. The category Case_date is the definitive date for the case. In SSW this is given in the format dd/mm/yyyy, from which I have extracted the year only for use in further analysis and calculations. The number of cases exceeds the number of accused persons, which is 3219. The reason is that some individuals were brought to court more than once. The frequencies of trials are very uneven from year to year. Christina Larnier says there were considerable fluctuations in the annual rate of prosecutions: ‘There were lulls in which there were almost no cases, there were periods in which there was a regular small supply, and there were five peaks of intensive prosecution’.¹⁵⁹ For the understanding of the word ‘panic’, Lauren Martin suggests a terminological shift: to change the previous use of the term ‘panic’ into ‘hunt’, reserving ‘panic’ for a state of mind, not the practices of witchcraft.¹⁶⁰ Martin may have a point that the word ‘panic’ might imply a state of mind, but within scholarly witchcraft research to date, the word has been used of intensive witch-hunting in defined periods. I see no need for a change in this customary use. So I follow Larnier and understand the term ‘panic’ as accused persons ‘tried in groups during epidemics of witch-hunting’.¹⁶¹

There has been broad consensus, but not total agreement, among scholars about which periods in the Scottish material should be defined as panic periods. J. K. Swales and Hugh V. McLachlan make a distinction between panic periods and non-panic periods.¹⁶² They conclude with 1628–30, 1649–50, 1658–9, and 1661–2 as ‘panic’ periods. Larnier operates with five peaks of intensive prosecution: 1590–1, 1597, 1629–30, 1649, and 1661–2.¹⁶³ Lauren Martin also has five peaks: 1590–1, 1597, 1629–30, 1649, and 1661–2.¹⁶⁴ Julian

¹⁵⁷ Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 90, 253, 279, 281. There was an execution of two women in Poznan in Poland in 1793, but this trial was not sanctioned of higher state authorities.

¹⁵⁸ A few cases are known prior to 1563, see Larnier, *Enemies*, 65.

¹⁵⁹ Larnier, *Enemies*, 60.

¹⁶⁰ Martin, L., ‘Scottish Witchcraft Panics Re-examined’, in J. Goodare, L. Martin and J. Miller, *Witchcraft and Belief*, 122.

¹⁶¹ Larnier, *Enemies*, 17.

¹⁶² Swales, J. F. and McLachlan, H. V., ‘Witchcraft and the status of women: a comment’, *British Journal of Sociology*, vol. xxx, no. 3 (1979) 349–58.

¹⁶³ Larnier, *Enemies*, 60.

¹⁶⁴ Martin, ‘Scottish Witchcraft Panics’, 119.

Goodare mentions five great witchcraft panics.¹⁶⁵ Stuart MacDonald operates with six peaks; in addition to those mentioned by Lauren Martin he adds 1658–9.¹⁶⁶ SSW does not define panic as a separate variable. In the SSW ‘Introduction’ it is stated that there are five episodes that stand out as periods of high-level accusation and prosecution of witches: 1590–1, 1597, 1628–30, 1649, and 1661–2.

As seen above, the previously mentioned defined panic years are not in total agreement with each other. For the Scottish material, I define a panic rather mechanically as more than 70 cases per year. In addition, I include years with less than 70 cases per year with a high frequency of cases if they immediately precede or follow the undisputed panic year.¹⁶⁷ The result is that where witchcraft researchers have previously found five peaks of intensive prosecution during the Scottish witch-hunt, according to my definition there are seven peaks.¹⁶⁸ The large witchcraft panics took place in 1590–1, 1597, 1628–30, 1643–4, 1649–50, 1658–9, and 1661–2.

Figure 2 below shows all the Scottish witchcraft cases for the period 1560–1727 as documented in SSW. Each figure is for one year. See also Table 49, Appendix. Missing data for the 1590s has been pointed out by Goodare.¹⁶⁹

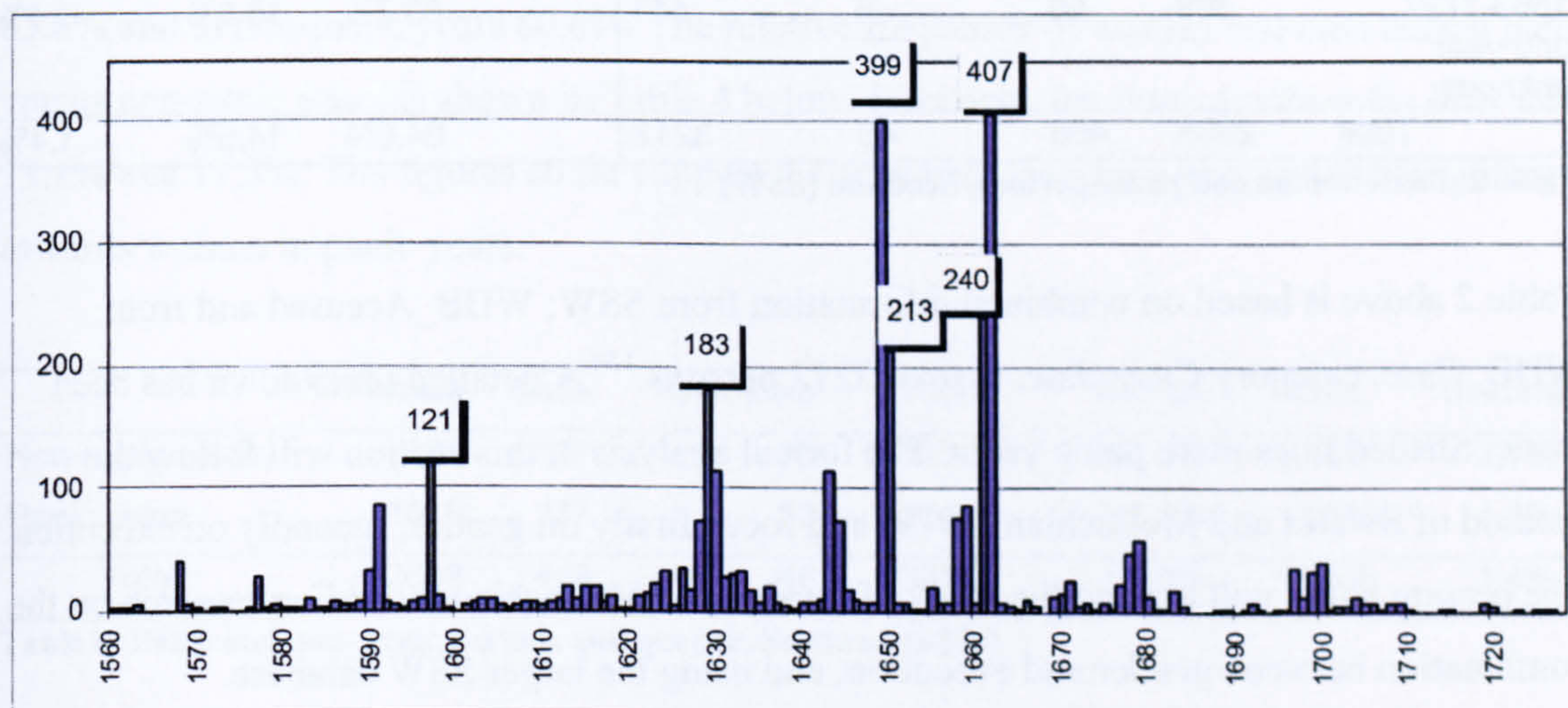


Figure 2 Witchcraft cases by year 1561–1727, Scotland (SSW)

¹⁶⁵ Goodare, J., ‘Witch-hunting and the Scottish state’, *Scottish witch-hunt in context* (Manchester, 2002), 122.

¹⁶⁶ Macdonald, *The Witches of Fife*, 19.

¹⁶⁷ This has relevance for the years 1590, 1641, 1528 and 1544.

¹⁶⁸ See e.g. SSW ‘Introduction to Scottish Witchcraft’; Martin, ‘Scottish Witchcraft Panics’, 119.

¹⁶⁹ Goodare suggests about 400 cases during the 1597 panic, ‘Scottish witchcraft panic of 1597’, 70.

2.3.2 Panic versus non-panic periods

A substantial number of witchcraft trials in Scotland occurred in concentrated periods shown as peaks in Figure 2. This is a marked feature for the witch-hunt. In this section questions related to the differences between the peak periods and the non-peak periods will be focused on.

Case Year	Female	Male	Unknown	Total	Per cent		
					Female	Male	Unknown
1561-1589	79	26	7	112	70.5%	23.2%	6.3%
1590-1591	76	24	5	105	72.4%	22.9%	4.8%
1592-1596	16	4	1	21	76.2%	19.0%	4.8%
1597	97	14	1	112	86.6%	12.5%	0.9%
1598-1627	234	52	6	292	80.1%	17.8%	2.1%
1628-1630	311	50	3	364	85.4%	13.7%	0.8%
1631-1642	125	28	2	155	80.6%	18.1%	1.3%
1643-1644	162	11	0	173	93.6%	6.4%	0.0%
1645-1648	33	2	0	35	94.3%	5.7%	0.0%
1649-1650	474	80	3	557	85.1%	14.4%	0.5%
1651-1657	28	13	1	42	66.7%	31.0%	2.4%
1658-1659	143	16	2	161	88.8%	9.9%	1.2%
1660	4	0	0	4	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
1661-1662	547	82	9	638	85.7%	12.9%	1.4%
1663-1727	369	66	6	441	83.7%	15.0%	1.4%
and year unknown							
Total	2698	468	46	3212	84.0%	14.6%	1.4%

Table 2 Panic versus non-panic periods, Scotland (SSW)

Table 2 above is based on combined information from SSW: WDB_Accused and from WDB_Case, category Case_date, in total 3212 persons.¹⁷⁰ A detailed breakdown has been made. Shaded lines mark panic years. The formal analysis in this section will follow the method of Swales and McLachlan (1979) and focus firstly on gender, secondly on execution. The present study will expand the study of Swales and McLachlan by adding research on the combination between gender and execution, and using the larger SSW database.

A total of accused persons in panic periods versus non-panic periods is presented in Table 3 below.

¹⁷⁰ When linking 'Accused' to 'Case_date' 7 observations are lost; 4 females and 3 with unknown gender. This small discrepancy in the sources will not influence the following conclusions.

	Persons	Per cent
Non-panic years	1102	34.3%
Panic years	2110	65.7%
Total	3212	100%

Table 3 Persons accused of witchcraft, Scotland, panic versus non-panic periods (SSW)

This table shows that 66% of the accused were tried during panic periods, which in total span fourteen years, while 34% of the accused were tried during non-panic periods. In panic periods there were on average 151 cases annually, against about seven cases annually in non-panic years. This indicates that the majority of witchcraft trials took place during the panic periods and also demonstrates clearly a high relative intensity of trials during these periods.

A combined gender and execution analysis will be carried out in the following section. An important question to pose is, to what degree did panics affect the gender composition? My hypothesis is that the relative number of women executed in panic periods was higher than in non-panic periods.

In total, 83.9% of all the accused in SSW are women, 14.5% are men and 1.4% are unknown gender, see Table 1 above. The relative frequency for women in panic years is 85.8% and in non-panic years 80.6%. The relative frequency of women and men during panic versus non-panic years is shown in Table 4 below. Similarly, the same numbers for men are 13.1% and 17.3%. The figures so far support the argument that there was a slight weighting towards women in panic years.

	Female	Male	Unknown	Total	Female	Male	Unknown
Non-panic years	888	191	23	1102	80.6%	17.3%	2.1%
Panic years	1810	277	23	2110	85.8%	13.1%	1.1%
Total	2698	468	46	3212	84.0%	14.6%	1.4%

Table 4 Panic and non-panic periods and gender, Scotland (SSW)

A more detailed test is shown in Table 51, Appendix. The test indicates that there is a significant difference of frequency between panic and non-panic periods for female accused. Women were more exposed to accusations than men in panic years.¹⁷¹

We also have to consider the consequences of being tried. My second hypothesis is that there was a generally higher frequency of executions in panic years versus non-panic years, irrespective of gender. This has been tested in two steps. First, the severity of sentence

¹⁷¹ Chi-square 11.076.

in panic versus non-panic periods has to be studied. Increased activity related to witchcraft persecution in panic periods has already been demonstrated. Table 5 below shows the outcome in all cases with known sentences, also mentioned by Martin and Miller.¹⁷² Of the 307 trials where the sentence is known during panic years, 112 were given sentences of execution, 13 were banished, 4 were excommunicated and 1 was sentenced to prison. In non-panic years we find 94 executed, included 1 hung (a male in 1677), all the 52 released individuals, the 11 declared fugitive and the 14 banished. In the overall picture the sentences during non-panic periods were more lenient than those passed during panic years.

Sentence	Non-panic years	Panic years	Total
Banishment	14	13	27
Branded	1		1
Declared Fugitive	11		11
Excommunicated	2	4	6
Execution	93	112	205
Hung	1		1
Prison		1	1
Public Humiliation	1		1
Put to the horn	2		2
Released	52		52
Unknown sentence	833	2070	2903
Total	1010	2200	3210

Table 5 Sentences in panic versus non-panic periods, Scotland (SSW)

My hypothesis is that there was a generally higher frequency of executions in panic years versus non-panic years irrespective of gender, so that panic periods were more dangerous than non-panic periods for all those accused of witchcraft. I refer to Table 6 below and Table 52, Appendix. It must be emphasised that in the Scottish source material for witchcraft cases a substantial amount of information about verdicts and sentences is missing, especially in court records from local courts.¹⁷³ Therefore the known figures for verdicts and sentences are relatively low compared to the number of individuals accused of witchcraft.

	Executed	Not executed	Total
Non-panic years	94	83	177
Panic years	112	18	130
Total	206	101	307

Table 6 Panic periods and executions, Scotland (SSW)

¹⁷² Martin, L. and Miller, J., 'Some Findings from the Survey of Scottish Witchcraft', in J. Goodare, L. Martin and J. Miller (eds.) *Witchcraft and Belief*, 56.

¹⁷³ Martin and Miller, 'Some Findings', 53.

Of the 307 known sentences mentioned above, Table 6 shows that 130 sentences were passed in panic years and 177 in non-panic years. The findings are that in panic years 112 out of 130 were executed. In non-panic years 94 out of 177 were executed.¹⁷⁴ A more detailed test strongly supports the hypothesis of a relative over-frequency of execution in panic versus non-panic years, see Table 52, Appendix.¹⁷⁵

Were women as a group more exposed than men to execution during panic years? My hypothesis is that they were. When examining the group of women executed in panic versus non-panic periods, this hypothesis is also supported, which will be demonstrated in the following.

	Executed	Not executed	Total
Non-panic years	75	68	143
Panic years	100	16	116
Total	175	84	259

Table 7 Women executed in panic versus non-panic periods (SSW)

Table 7 above shows that in panic periods 100 women were sentenced to execution and 16 women were not sentenced to execution. In non-panic years 75 women were sentenced to execution and 68 received another sentence. This result is tested in more detail and the result is shown in Table 53, Appendix. Women who were brought to trial were more frequently executed in panic years than in non-panic years, and the result is highly significant.¹⁷⁶

Looking at men as a group, the same type of frequencies have been calculated, see Table 8 below.

	Execution	Not executed	Total
Non-panic years	16	14	30
Panic years	12	2	14
Total	28	16	44

Table 8 Men executed in panic versus non-panic periods (SSW)

Table 8 shows that in panic periods 12 men were sentenced to execution and two received other sentences. In non-panic periods, 16 men were sentenced to execution and 14 got other sentences. This is tested in more detail and the result is shown in Table 54, Appendix. The result shows marginal significance.¹⁷⁷ It emerges that men were slightly more exposed to execution in panic years than in non-panic years. Women were clearly more exposed to

¹⁷⁴ These numbers include 4 persons with gender unknown: 3 executed and 1 released, all in non-panic years.

¹⁷⁵ Chi-square 37.078.

¹⁷⁶ Chi-square 33.309.

¹⁷⁷ Chi-square 4.325.

execution in panic years than in non-panic years. The result of the test is stronger for women than the same test for men.

The calculations above show that it has been possible to reveal the gender bias and the vulnerability of women during panics. This becomes very clear when looking at the sentences passed during panic years. Swales and McLachlan have based their study on Christina Larner et al., *A Source-Book of Scottish Witchcraft*.¹⁷⁸ This book has a different sample of tried persons compared to SSW. Swales and McLachlan operate in total with 1887 individuals accused and data on the fate of 684 of those formally accused of witchcraft in Scotland. Compared with Swales and McLachlan's findings, my results support their conclusion that there was a significantly higher frequency of women accused during panic years than during non-panic years.¹⁷⁹ My results also support their conclusion that the proportion of accused individuals in witchcraft trials who were sentenced to execution was much higher in panic years than in non-panic years.¹⁸⁰ Swales and McLachlan did not analyse the gender difference related to executions during panic versus non-panic years. My results show that in panic years the relative proportion of women being sentenced to execution was much higher than in non-panic years. For men, the proportion of those sentenced to execution is slightly higher than expected in panic years compared to non-panic years. If someone was accused of witchcraft during a panic period, the chance was high that this person was a woman and the risk of being burned was very high.

2.4 Types of trial

This section will focus on the connection between the court and the result of a witchcraft trial. The frequency of cases during the witch-hunt, gender, activity during panic years and execution rates will be analysed.

The 'Introduction' to SSW mentions six different types of courts possibly involved in the witch-hunt: local church courts (kirk sessions and presbyteries), the privy council (or sometimes committee of estates or parliament), the court of justiciary, circuit courts, regular local courts and local criminal courts held under commissions of justiciary. Local church courts had no criminal jurisdiction. The privy council issued commissions of justiciary authorising people to hold trials, but did not hold trials itself. The court of justiciary was the

¹⁷⁸ Larner, Lee, McLachlan, SBSW.

¹⁷⁹ Swales and McLachlan, 'Witchcraft', 353.

¹⁸⁰ Swales and McLachlan, 'Witchcraft', 352.

highest criminal court, usually held in Edinburgh, and it tried witches centrally. Circuit courts were travelling versions of the court of justiciary that occasionally visited the regions. These periodic travelling courts were also called justice ayres.¹⁸¹ They often tried witches when they were held. Two types of local courts were found. The regular local courts (sheriff courts, burgh courts) did not normally try witches, as witchcraft was considered a serious crime which was beyond their jurisdiction. Local criminal courts held under commissions of justiciary were usually ad hoc courts convened to try one person for one crime. Most Scottish witches were tried in such courts. Levack argues that there were more procedural options in Scotland than in England, therefore it was much easier to start a witchcraft prosecution, ‘and this accounts for the far greater number of witchcraft trials in the northern kingdom when figured on a per capita basis’.¹⁸²

In SSW a distinction is made between central, local and mixed central-local types of trial and suspects mentioned in the trial process of another witch.¹⁸³ The latter are not taken into account in my calculations. Mixed central-local trials comprise circuit courts and local trials with central representatives.¹⁸⁴ SSW has registered 110 trials held in ‘Circuit court’ and 19 registered under ‘Localwitchrep’, defined as ‘Local trial with central representative’.¹⁸⁵ There were 9 circuit court cases from the beginning of the witch-hunt until 1590, 2 of those cases in 1590. From 1591 until 1655 there were no circuit court cases; the bulk came after 1670. Levack mentions that the circuit courts, which the authorities had attempted to use occasionally in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, began to function in a more regular fashion after 1671 and ‘yielded far more acquittals than those in which local commissioners acted as judges’.¹⁸⁶

Central	178	7.4%
Local	1936	80.4%
Mixed Central-Local	293	12.2%
Total	2407	100%

Table 9 Types of trial, Scotland (SSW)

¹⁸¹ Goodare, ‘Witch-hunting and the Scottish state’, 125.

¹⁸² Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 21.

¹⁸³ Martin and Miller in ‘Some Findings’, 54, also mention as a fourth trial type identified in SSW, ‘suspects mentioned in the trial process of another witch’.

¹⁸⁴ In SSW this information is found under WDB_Trial, Trial type 3, registered as Circuit court and Localwitchrep.

¹⁸⁵ Introduction SSW, 28.

¹⁸⁶ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 137.

The information is taken from WDB_Trial, which has 3210 records. The total number of known types of trial is 2407, see Table 9 above. The figures are based on Table 55, Appendix. Of the cases where the type of trial is known, 80.4% were held in local courts.

I will discuss below how types of trial relate to gender, frequency and panic periods. Table 10 shows the distribution between women and men in all trials, unknown included.¹⁸⁷ When 'unknown' gender is excluded, there is an overrepresentation of women compared to men in local trials.

Trial Type	Female	Male	Unknown gender	Total
Central	139	36	3	178
Local	1663	250	23	1936
Mixed central-local	240	52	1	293
Unknown trial type	672	118	13	803
Total	2714	456	40	3210

Table 10 Types of trial and gender, Scotland (SSW)

Counts of trial types and gender for the entire period of Scottish witch-hunt are shown in Table 56, Appendix. Women are over-represented in local trials. Men are over-represented in central and mixed central-local trials, therefore under-represented in local trials. The difference between these three groups is significant as regards gender, verified by the chi-square test, which indicates that the probability of a woman being tried in a local court was higher than for a man, see Table 57 in the Appendix.¹⁸⁸ The distribution between women and men in the three types of trial is not what one could expect based on the total distribution of women and men in the material, and the total distribution between the three types of trial.

Figure 3 – Figure 5 below show annual frequencies for all individuals accused in central, local and mixed central-local trials. The period of witch-hunting is divided into three periods of about equal length. Each period is represented in a separate figure, with different shadings for each trial type. Note that the scale on the vertical axis is different for the three figures.

¹⁸⁷ WDB_Trial is linked against Gender from WDB_Accused, which gives 3210 references for trials.

¹⁸⁸ Chi-square 10.960.

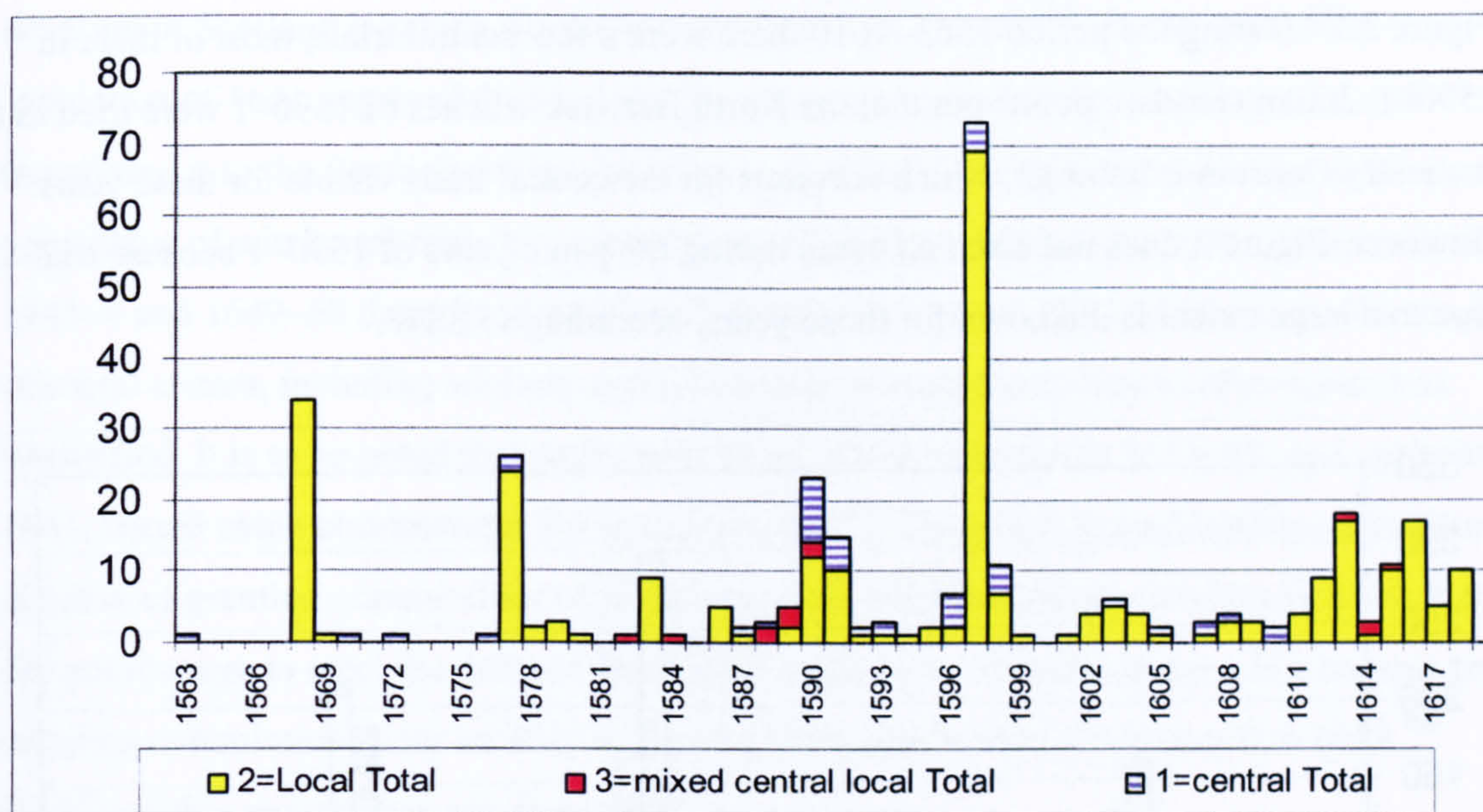


Figure 3 Accused persons and types of trial, Scotland, 1563–1619 (SSW)

Figure 3 presents cases for the period 1563–1619. Both central, local and mixed central-local trials are represented during this period. There were a few mixed central-local trials in 1582, 1584, 1588, 1589 and 1590. These may have to do with attempts made by the government to revive the old Scottish system of justice ayres, that is, judges periodically travelling through the country to try persons accused of various crimes. Justice ayres were used, for example, in an early witch-hunt in 1568–9.¹⁸⁹ A serious attempt to revive the system of justice ayres was made by James VI in 1587.¹⁹⁰ However, the central criminal court could not handle the burden of both a substantial number of cases in Edinburgh and a circuit of the shires: ‘The old system of justice ayres gave way, therefore, to the occasional appointment of justice deputes to particular areas and the granting of conciliar commissions to local magistrates from either the privy council or parliament, during whose sessions the privy council did not sit’.¹⁹¹ This is the reason why local trials, held by judicial commissions issued to local magistrates and other elite figures were the prevailing type of trial throughout the period of Scottish witch-hunt until 1662, with some exceptions for the years 1655–1661, as will be seen below. Requests from local authorities to have witches tried were responded to by the central government. In most cases local authorities got permission to try the suspected witches in their own local authority by a commission of justiciary appointed by the privy council, a fact clearly demonstrated in

¹⁸⁹ Goodare, ‘Witch-hunting and the Scottish state’, 126.

¹⁹⁰ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 27.

¹⁹¹ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 28.

Figure 3.¹⁹² During the period 1563–1610 there were a few central trials, most of them in 1590–1. Julian Goodare points out that the North Berwick witches of 1590–1 were tried in the Justiciary Court in Edinburgh, which accounts for the central trials visible for these years.¹⁹³ However, Figure 3 does not catch all cases during the panic years of 1590–1 because trial type to a large extent is unknown for those years, according to SSW.

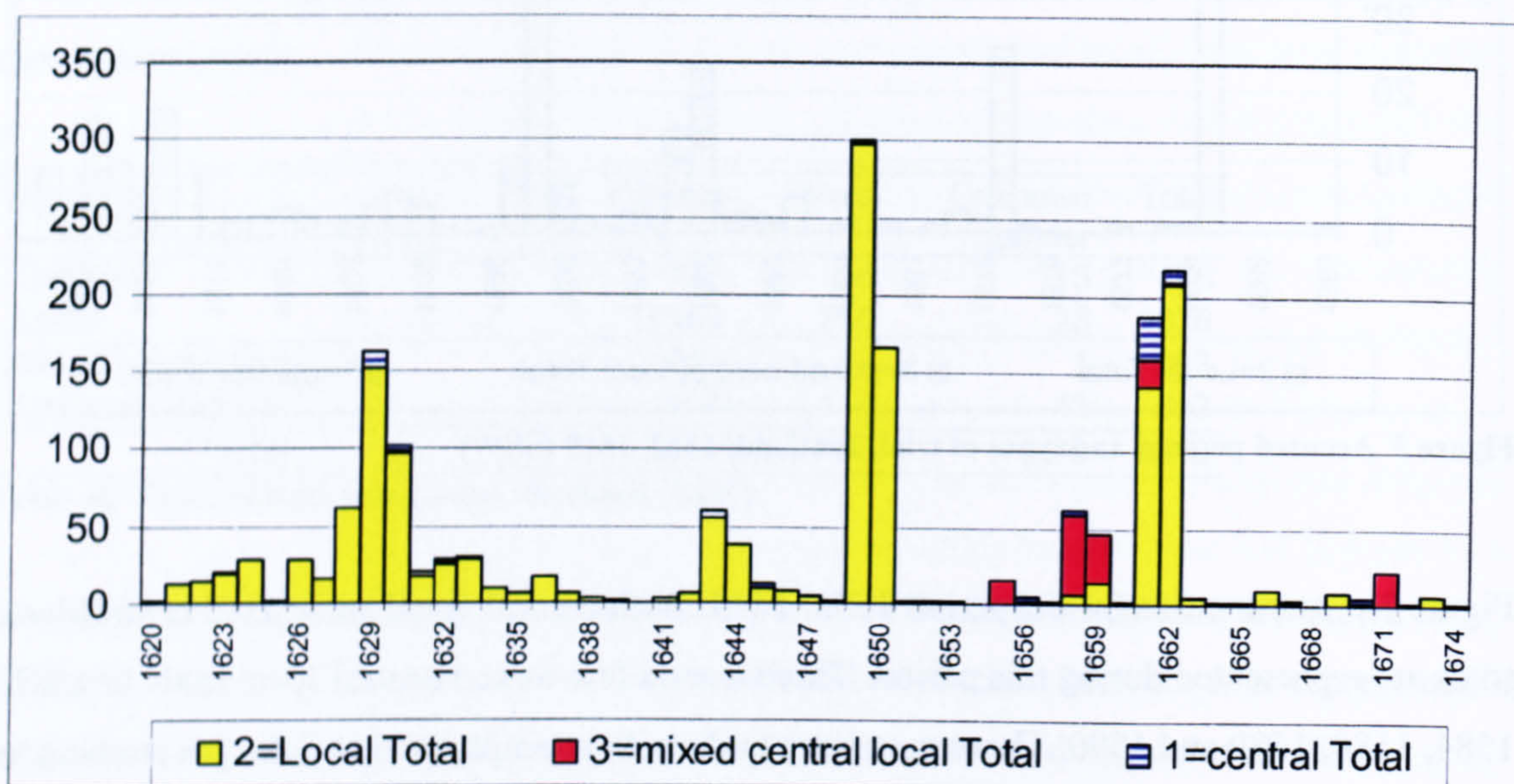


Figure 4 Accused persons and types of trial, Scotland, 1620–1674 (SSW)

Figure 4 documents the presence of a majority of local trials from 1620 until 1662. After 1662 there were very few local trials. This period includes the panics of 1628–30, 1643–4, 1649–50, 1658–9 and 1661–2, i.e. the bulk of witchcraft trials in Scotland. Several of these panics coincided with dramatic political events, mentioned by Levack as ‘critical junctions’:¹⁹⁴ the panic starting in 1649, the year when Charles I was executed; the panic of 1658–9, the last years of the protectorate, and the last panic, 1661–2, which took place shortly after the revolution had ended. Most of these trials were local trials authorised by commissions of justiciary: ‘During the 1620s and the 1630s the privy council had authorized more than 85 percent of all witchcraft prosecutions by granting commissions to local authorities to conduct the trials by themselves’.¹⁹⁵ Political events during the years around 1640 – the Bishops’ Wars of 1639 and 1640, the first civil war, 1640, and the parliaments summoned in 1640 – led to a

¹⁹² Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 135.

¹⁹³ Goodare, J., ‘The framework for Scottish witch-hunting’, 240–1.

¹⁹⁴ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 135.

¹⁹⁵ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 59.

situation in Scotland in which the privy council was weakened.¹⁹⁶ The revolutionary legislation of 1641 deprived the king and the privy council of much of their power and transferred it to the Scottish parliament. Due to this there was a strong reduction in the percentage of witchcraft trials by commissions of justiciary during the 1640s. However, in 1643–4 and 1649–50 the privy council and parliament supported the prosecution of a number of moral crimes, including adultery and witchcraft, in such a way that local pressure was intensified. It is to be noted that parliament itself, which emerged in 1649–50, and again in 1661, issued many commissions for trying witches.¹⁹⁷ The privy council continued its former practice of granting commissions of justiciary to try witches until its abolition in 1650, but it did not manage to meet the demand from local authorities. This can be seen in a request for a standing commission to try witches in East Lothian, sent to the privy council in 1649.¹⁹⁸ However, this request was not assented to.

The witch-hunt went into a different phase after 1650, as illustrated in Figure 4, with a sudden reduction of trials in total and an increased occurrence of mixed central-local trials. These trials took place in 1655, 1658, 1659 and 1671; respectively 16, 52, 31 and 22. It had been difficult to make the system of circuit courts function effectively, but during the Cromwellian occupation of the 1650s these courts operated as intended, as seen in the figure above. In 1671 all trials were mixed central-local. An explanation for this might be that a system for holding regular circuit courts was established after 1671.¹⁹⁹ The mixed central-local trials towards the end of the witch-hunt are not characterised by denunciation of other suspects.²⁰⁰ Thus the numbers of accused were kept at a low level and we do not see the sudden increase in trials characterising panics.

Central trials were few in number during this period. There was a shift away from central jurisdiction, elucidated in the decline in the number of cases during the mid-century decades held in the court of justiciary in Edinburgh. Only 47 cases out of more than 500 dealing with preliminary investigations for witchcraft reached this court during the period 1641–50.²⁰¹ The acquittal percentage in the central court was probably higher than in local

¹⁹⁶ Also the signing of the Solemn League and Covenant, 1643, the capture of the king, 1646, the second civil war, 1648, the execution of the king, abolition of the monarchy and establishment of a republic in 1649 contributed to weaken the vigor of the central Scottish authorities.

¹⁹⁷ Goodare, 'Witch-hunting and the Scottish state', 135.

¹⁹⁸ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 60.

¹⁹⁹ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 137.

²⁰⁰ In 1671 only one accused, Geilles Burnett, Aberdeen, was named by another.

²⁰¹ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 59.

courts. We know that eight of the 47 tried were executed; the fate of the rest we do not know.²⁰²

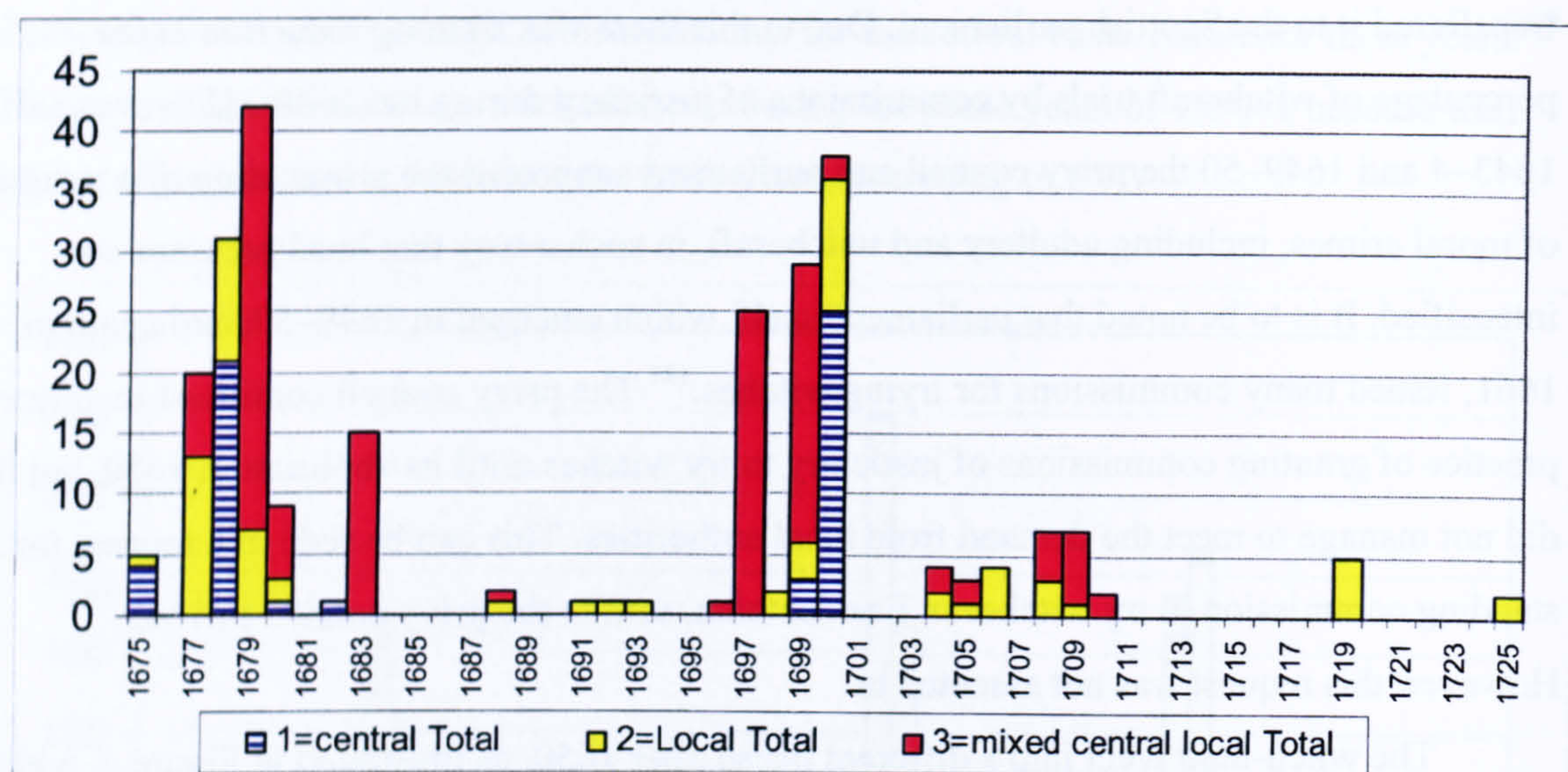


Figure 5 Accused persons and types of trial, Scotland, 1675–1725

Figure 5, representing the period 1675–1725, presents quite another proportion of the three types of trial than seen in the previous periods. A broader effort of the Scottish government to keep up standards of judicial proof, to reduce judicial torture and to supervise trials led to a reduction in trials as well as a reduction in convictions and executions, as will be seen below. Levack states that: ‘This meant first of all insisting that all trials, especially those of witchcraft be conducted by properly constituted authority. This was the import of the council’s order of April 1662 and its frequent reiteration after that date’.²⁰³ What happened in 1662 was that the lord advocate and the judges of the justiciary court managed to impose effective checks on local witch-hunting by reducing the number of commissions of justiciary issued and instead funnelling local cases into the central court. Goodare states that the same ruling elite that activated the witchcraft machinery ended it in the spring of 1662 ‘by acquitting a number of suspects, curtailing powers of arrest and torture, imprisoning two witch-prickers, and simply declining to authorise further trials’.²⁰⁴ As a result of the steps taken by the central authorities to take control of the witch-hunt in 1662, there was a marked decrease in number of witchcraft trials, as commented upon by Levack: ‘Whereas more than

²⁰² Most of the accused came from the Lothians. Even if the judiciary court had jurisdiction over the whole of Scotland, the cost of bringing accused and witnesses to Edinburgh for trial had as its result that the accused persons living in the areas around Edinburgh, Lothians, were most likely to be brought before the central criminal court, see Martin, ‘Scottish Witchcraft Panics’, 124–5; Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 59.

²⁰³ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 137.

²⁰⁴ Goodare, ‘Witch-hunting and the Scottish state’, 142.

1,150 witches had been tried by conciliar or parliamentary commissions of justiciary before 1662, the total number of such cases heard between 1662 and 1727 dropped to 97'.²⁰⁵

The tendency from 1662 onwards towards closer supervision by the central authorities in witchcraft cases is illustrated in Figure 4 and Figure 5. We see an increase in central trials, with the result that two thirds of the cases tried there after 1662 ended in acquittals.²⁰⁶ There was also an increase in mixed central-local trials, a continuing tendency going back to 1655, as mentioned above. The successful implementation of the circuit court system continued during this last phase of the Scottish witch-hunt. The number of acquittals in these courts was high and the number of executions very low, resulting in only two individuals executed by circuit courts during the period 1671–1709.²⁰⁷ The privy council also took a tighter grip on the trials conducted by commissions of justiciary by claiming that a justice depute from Edinburgh should be included among the commissioners. Thus a central representative was present during the trial and ensured that strict legal standards were followed.²⁰⁸

As the figure shows, local trials were not eliminated, but they were in the minority in most years, with the exception of 1677, where there were thirteen local trials and seven mixed central-local trials. For most years during the period 1675–1725, the number of local trials was fewer than ten. After 1700 the number of local trials did not reach a figure of more than five per year.

To summarize the analyses of types of trial: The proportion between the different types of trial changed over time. There was a clear tendency for local trials, which strongly dominated the first two thirds of the period of Scottish witch-hunt, to be replaced by central and mixed central-local trials in the last third. After 1655, and in particular after 1670, there was an increase in mixed central-local trials which was undoubtedly related to successful re-implementation of the circuit court system.²⁰⁹ The change in the relative proportion of types of trial over time indicates that stronger control from central judicial authorities contributed to the decline and end of witchcraft persecution in Scotland.

With regard to gender, it has been shown above that women tended to receive a different type of treatment during witchcraft trials in panic years versus non-panic years. I would like to go a step further and test whether a certain type of trial dominates when women are accused in panic periods.

²⁰⁵ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 136.

²⁰⁶ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 137.

²⁰⁷ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 137.

²⁰⁸ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 138.

²⁰⁹ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 137.

Female only	Central	Local	Mixed central-local	Total
Non-panic years	81	488	142	711
Panic years	58	1175	98	1331
Total	139	1663	240	2042

Table 11 Women, types of trial and panic versus non-panic periods (SSW)

Table 11 above demonstrates that women were tried more frequently in local trials than in central trials in panic contra non-panic periods. In central and mixed central-local trials we see that there were more women tried in non-panic years than in panic years. Of central trials, 58 out of 139 were in panic years, which is 42%. Of mixed central-local trials, 98 out of 240 were in panic years, which is 41%. In local trials we see that there were 1175 women tried in panic years and 488 in non-panic years. 71% were tried in panic years. Formal statistical testing verifies that the correlation between local trials and panic years for women is significant, see Table 58, Appendix.²¹⁰ This means that there was a higher likelihood of a woman accused of witchcraft being tried in a local trial during panic years than during non-panic years.

Men and trial types in panic versus non-panic years are analysed in a similar way. Table 12 below illustrates that for central trials the frequency is approximately the same for panic versus non-panic periods: 17 central trials out of 36 were in panic periods, about half. So here we see a difference between men and women. The proportion of central trials in panic years is lower among women than among men. With regard to mixed central-local trials, there are ten trials out of 52 in panic periods, which is one fifth. We get the same tendency for men as for women related to mixed central-local trials; most were in non-panic periods. However, the tendency is stronger for men than for women. In local trials we have 158 in panic periods and 92 in non-panic periods, about 63% and 27% respectively. Here too the tendency is the same for men as for women.

Male only	Central	Local	Mixed central-local	Total
Non-panic years	19	92	42	153
Panic years	17	158	10	185
Total	36	250	52	338

Table 12 Men, types of trial and panic versus non-panic periods

²¹⁰ Chi-square 118.340.

When tested statistically, the over-representation of local trials in panic years is significant. Men are also over-represented in local trials in panic years, see Table 59, Appendix.²¹¹ But the clearest result is that for men there are very few occurrences of mixed central-local trials in panic years. It should be noted, however, that the numbers for men here are very small. In contrast, the probability for being tried in a local or central trial during panic years was almost equal to non-panic years for men and women, as can be read from Table 11 and Table 12 above.

The gender analyses show that panics seem to have had a strong influence on the distribution of trial types. Women and men were treated equally in that for both groups we find a greater number in local trials than expected for panic years. There is relatively little difference between women and men with regard to types of trial in non-panic periods.

The analyses of trial types above relate to my hypothesis in several ways. Firstly, the analyses relate to the question of interaction between central and local courts by demonstrating a change in the relative proportion of central, mixed central-local and local trials throughout the witch-hunt. Secondly, the analyses relate to the role of the state by substantiating the assumption that changes in the relative proportions of trial types was linked to amendments in national jurisdiction and politics. Thirdly, the analyses relate indirectly to the demonological element by showing the connection between panic periods and local trials, thus clarifying that panic periods had to do with a sudden upsurge of trials in local courts. I will argue that witchcraft panics were concerned with the demonological element due to the multiplying mechanism inherent in the collective aspect of this doctrine – i.e., pressure from the interrogators during the accused's confession to obtain the names of accomplices who had taken part in witches' meetings or collective sorcery operations. This resulted in many new suspects, who were interrogated in turn. This argument will be revisited as a recurrent theme throughout the thesis. Fourthly, the analyses show that women were treated differently from men in panic years. I will return to the influence of the demonological element during various periods throughout the witch-hunt and argue that this element contributes to explaining the intensity of witchcraft trials in panic periods, measured in severity of sentences as well as the gender proportion. Hence the following sections will deal with the execution rate and demonological confessions.

²¹¹ Chi-square 34.507.

2.5 Verdict and Sentence

2.5.1 The European context

The witch-hunts in Scotland and Finnmark were both extremely severe in a European context when measured by intensity of trials and the number of persons executed. This intensity may be defined as the proportion of accused or executed individuals in relation to the population in an area. It may alternatively be defined as a percentage of the number of executed in relation to the number of accused persons. I will first draw the background, placing Scotland in a European context as regards verdicts and sentences in witchcraft trials. Next, I will analyse the verdicts in relation to trial types, then I will analyse an estimate of executions in Scotland and, finally, I will analyse non-capital sentences passed.

A glance at the European background is useful when evaluating the severity of the witch-hunts in Scotland and Finnmark. It should be emphasised that there is ongoing research in witchcraft studies in Europe, which means that less-known areas might be illuminated and new knowledge come to light in future, thus updating the total number of individuals accused of witchcraft and executed for witchcraft. The question of how many people were executed during the European witchcraft trials is very difficult to answer. Richard M. Golden has set up a list of estimated populations around the year 1600 and the number killed during the witch-hunt for 24 European countries or regions.²¹²

According to Golden's list the estimated population in Europe in c.1600 was between 92.68 and 94.78 millions.²¹³ The estimated numbers executed in Europe as a whole were between 40,638 and 52,738. This represents about 0.05% executed of the population in c.1600. With regard to the intensity of the European witch-hunt Golden concluded: 'The English southeast, the German southwest and the northern duchy of Mecklenburg, the lowlands of Scotland, the Basque region in Spain, Switzerland, Lorraine, Franche-Comté, the outlying provinces of France, Dalarna in Sweden, western and central Poland, and the western coast of Finland endured intensive witch hunting'.²¹⁴ Even if several of the figures in Golden's article must be updated due to recent research, the main tendency is still valid.²¹⁵ Golden's four-

²¹² With regard to witchcraft geography, Marko Nennonen argues that the Western European paradigm has dominated witchcraft research so far. Nennonen, M., 'Witch Hunts in Europe: A New Geography', *Arv, Nordic Yearbook of Folklore*, lxii (2006), 168–72, 182. Probably this will change the coming years, as for instance Golden's encyclopedia has articles on several eastern European countries.

²¹³ Golden, 'Satan in Europe', 3–33.

²¹⁴ Golden, 'Satan in Europe', 22.

²¹⁵ For instance in Golden's article the figure 1337 executed for Scotland related to a population of 0.8 million, with reference to Lerner's *Enemies of God*, 63, has to be replaced by calculations based on data from SSW. I use 1 million as population estimate.

volume *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft. The Western Tradition* (2006) supports earlier estimates. Robert Muchembled states in the foreword: 'The heartland of witchcraft persecutions lay mostly in parts of west-central Europe, which were sharply disputed between Protestants and Catholics between 1560 and 1630, and there were later prolongations in eastern Europe during the post-1560 Catholic reconquest and in a few overseas colonies such as New England'.²¹⁶ Robin Briggs's estimate is that the number of people executed for witchcraft in Europe was somewhere between 40,000 and 50,000, 'figures which allow for a reasonable level of lost documentation' – an estimate very close to Golden's suggestion.²¹⁷ Other European witchcraft scholars operate in recent studies with estimates of between 40,000 and 60,000 executed: Marko Nennonen's estimation is 'less than 40,000'; Behringer's estimate is 50,000; Voltmer estimates between 50,000 and 60,000, and Levack's estimate is ca 45,000.²¹⁸

The fact that witch-hunts were very unevenly distributed throughout Europe is pointed out by Levack.²¹⁹ This comes clearly to the fore both in Golden's survey mentioned above and in a survey presented by Levack (2006), where the percentage of individuals executed among those accused of witchcraft reveals the intensity of witchcraft trials in 13 different European regions. Levack's list gives the number of people tried, the number of executions for these areas and the percentages of those executed in each area, showing a range from 21% executed in Geneva to 90% executed in the Pays de Vaud.²²⁰ Of the 13 regions, five have a percentage of more than 50% executed, three areas have between 40 and 50% executed and two regions have between 30 and 40% executed among those tried for witchcraft. Scotland and Norway are listed in this survey, Scotland with 67% executed out of 307 people tried (fates known).²²¹ Here the numbers for Scotland are taken from SSW, as will be seen below. Norway is listed with 38% executed out of 730 persons tried (fates known).²²² It must be mentioned that for the Finnmark region, the situation is different, with 68% executed out of 135 tried individuals (fates known). The intense witchcraft trials in northern Norway have only recently attracted attention among witchcraft historians internationally due to

²¹⁶ Muchembled, R., 'Foreword', in Golden, *Encyclopedia*, 4 vols., i, p. xxvii.

²¹⁷ Briggs, *Witches*, 225.

²¹⁸ Nennonen, 'Witch Hunts', 165; Behringer, W., *Witches and Witch-Hunts* (Cambridge, 2004), 156; Voltmer, R., 'Vom getrübbten Blick auf frühneuzeitlichen Hexenverfolgungen – Versuch einer Klärung', *Gnostika. Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft und Esotetik*, no. 11 (2006), 66; Levack, *Witch-Hunt*, 23.

²¹⁹ Levack, B. P., *Witchcraft in Continental Europe: Local and Regional Studies* (New York, 1992), ix-x, in B. P. Levack (ed.), *Witchcraft, Magic and Demonology*, vol. 5; Levack, *Witch-Hunt*, 204.

²²⁰ Levack, *Witch-Hunt*, 23.

²²¹ Levack, *Witch-Hunt*, 23; Martin and Miller, 'Some Findings', 56.

²²² For Norway, Næss, *Trolldomsprosessene i Norge*, has 280 executed and 863 accused, which gives 32%. Hagen, *Dei europeiske*, has 301 executed and 768 accused, which gives 39%.

publications in English by Hans Eyvind Næss, Liv Helene Willumsen and by Brian P. Levack.²²³

2.5.2 Verdicts in Scotland

Verdicts known in Scottish cases are registered in WDB_Trial. The verdict is defined in SSW as ‘the final ruling on whether or not the accused witch was guilty of the crime of witchcraft (as opposed to the individual indictments made against her or him)’.²²⁴ Only 299 verdicts have been registered. The relatively small figure indicates, as in the case of sentences and executions, that considerable information from the trials is missing. Where the verdict is registered as ‘unknown’ it would be an error to conclude that no verdicts were passed. Types of registered verdicts are distributed on trial type, shown in Table 13 below.

	Trial Type				
	Central	Local	Mixed central- local	Unknown trial type	Total
Verdict counts	77	144	78	0	299

Table 13 Verdicts and trial types, Scotland

The verdicts range from ‘guilty’ to ‘half guilty’ to ‘not guilty’ to ‘not proven’.²²⁵ ‘Guilty’ is in SSW defined as ‘found guilty of the crime of witchcraft, whether or not the suspect was found innocent of some of the specific indictments’. ‘Half Guilty’ is defined as ‘A catch-all term to include all those cases where the suspect was not found guilty, but there was enough evidence to presume some culpability for the crime. Not enough evidence to support a fully guilty verdict, but enough evidence to show a strong suspicion of guilt. This sometimes resulted in being found guilty of a lesser charge or being punished for suspicion of witchcraft’. ‘Not Guilty’ is defined as ‘clengit or cleinged, not guilty of the crime of witchcraft’. ‘Not Proven’ is defined as ‘not enough evidence to proceed, but not completely exonerated’. Frequency of the various types of verdict is given in Table 14 below. We see that in 299 cases for which the verdict is known, 236 were judged guilty, 45 not guilty, 11 not proven and 7 half guilty.

²²³ Næss, H. E., ‘Norway’ in Golden, *Encyclopedia*, 4 vols., iii, 838; Levack, ‘Themes of Recent Witchcraft Research’, 7–32; Willumsen, L. H., ‘Witch in the North’, *Scandinavian Journal of History*, vol. xxii, no. 3 (1997), 199–221 and ‘Witches in Scotland and Northern Norway: Two Case Studies’, in A. Kruse and P. Graves (eds.), *Images and Imaginations: perspectives on Britain and Scandinavia* (Edinburgh, 2007), 35–66.

²²⁴ DDD, SSW, 41.

²²⁵ DDD, SSW, 41.

Count of Verdict types	Total
Guilty	236
Half Guilty	7
Not Guilty	45
Not Proven	11
Total verdicts	299

Table 14 Type of verdict, Scotland

78 verdicts were given in mixed central-local courts. These verdicts can be split further into verdicts given in circuit courts and those given in non-circuit courts, see Table 15 below.

Verdict	Mixed central-local	
	Non-circuit	Circuit
Guilty	33	24
Half Guilty	0	0
Not Guilty	10	11
Not Proven	0	0

Table 15 Ratio of guilty - not guilty verdicts in the circuit courts, Scotland

In mixed central-local non-circuit courts the ratio of ‘guilty’ and ‘not guilty’ verdicts is 3:1 (33:10). In the circuit courts the ratio of ‘guilty’ versus ‘not guilty’ is about 2:1 (24:11). There is a difference in the relative ratios, but not a very great one. If we consider all the trials, there are 212 ‘guilty’ verdicts in non-circuit trials (236-24) and 34 verdicts of ‘not guilty’ (45-11). The ratio of guilty to not guilty is then about 6:1. It is obvious that there is less occurrence of the ‘guilty’ verdict in circuit court trials than in non-circuit courts. From the sample of known verdicts, the chance of being judged ‘guilty’ in a non-circuit court was about three times as high as in a circuit court, a fact which will be discussed in greater detail below.

2.5.3 Estimated executions in Scotland

In this section I will throw light on the intensity of witchcraft trials in Scotland by analysing the sentences given – and in particular the sentence of execution – in relation to types of trial and in relation to panic years.

There is a high number of Scottish witchcraft cases for which we do not have substantial information about the trial, so it is difficult to state the execution rate with any precision. Christina Larnier has presented an estimate for those executed in Scotland. She suggests 1,337 executions, with a possible marginal error of 300 either way. Out of 2,208 accused persons, the estimated proportion of those executed was 60.6%.²²⁶ In SSW WDB_Trial both ‘Verdict’, ‘Sentence’ and ‘Execution’ are registered as fields. Under ‘Sentence’ all types of sentences are listed, among them ‘Execution’, counting 205, as

²²⁶ Larnier, *Enemies*, 63; Larnier, *SBSW*, Tables 1 and 2, 237.

illustrated in Table 16 below. In addition 1 is registered as ‘Hung’, in total 206 executions. These will in the following be called ‘Sentence Execution’. We know of 307 detailed sentences. The number 307 is the difference between 3,210 total trials and 2,903 trials with unknown sentences.

Sentence	Total
Banishment	27
Branded	1
Declared Fugitive	11
Excommunicated	6
Execution	205
Hung	1
Prison	1
Public Humiliation	1
Put to the horn	2
Released	52
Unknown	2903
Total	3210

Table 16 Sentence types, Scotland (SSW)

In addition to ‘Sentence Execution’, SSW has an additional field ‘Execution’, which has 230 records. These 230 will in the following be called ‘Field Execution’. The difference between 205 and 230 has to do with information about executed persons from other sources than court records. The 230 cases are listed by year, see Table 60 and Table 65 in the Appendix. By linking information on the sentences given to the 3212 named individuals accused of witchcraft in SSW, it has been suggested in the ‘Introduction to Scottish Witchcraft’, and by witchcraft scholars, that about 67% might have been executed.²²⁷ It seems clear that one should be cautious with regard to calculations of sentences given for the total population. Still, it is possible to explore the SSW data more thoroughly, and an attempt will be made in this section to find out how many were executed during the witchcraft trials in Scotland. I will argue along three lines. Firstly, I will extrapolate to the total population from ‘Sentence Execution’ as a percentage of total known sentences. Secondly, I will argue that the sentences were given in different types of trial, and I will use the relative frequency of trials for extrapolation. Thirdly, I will argue that the frequency of executions varied over time, which can be demonstrated by an analysis of periodical distribution. From the relative frequency in different periods I will extrapolate to the total number of trials. Results from the three methods are, in my view, surprisingly close to each other.

²²⁷ ‘Introduction’, SSW; Martin and Miller, ‘Some Findings’, 56.

As seen above, so far the estimates of those executed during the Scottish witchcraft trials have been based on extrapolations from a sample of known sentences of execution. It may be tempting to reason as follows: given that we know that 67.1% of the known sentences ended in a sentence of execution (206 of 307), could the number of those executed also be about 67% of the number of trials where the actual sentence is unknown? If all the cases with missing information about the actual sentence are in this respect similar to the relatively few cases with known registered sentences, we can predict that in total 2154 trials would have resulted in sentences of execution (67.1% of 3210). The estimate of this number is based on an extrapolation from a sample of about 10% of the total number of trials. I will argue below for a more detailed estimate of the number of executed people during the Scottish witchcraft trials, and I will also try to establish a confidence interval, a statistically based error margin, around the estimate.

The actual number of executions during Scottish witchcraft trials is not known because many of the written sources have disappeared over the centuries. SSW states in WDB_Trial that 3210 trials took place. Of these, only 307 have a documented sentence and 2903 have sentences unknown. Of the 307 documented sentences, 206 were ‘Sentence Execution’. These sentences related to trial types are shown in Table 17 below.

	Central trial	Local trial	Mixed central-local Circuit Court trial	Mixed central local other than Circuit Court trial	Total (unknown trials excluded)
Sentence of Execution and Hung	60	101	16	29	206
Total known trials	178	1936	110	183	2407

Table 17 ‘Sentence Execution’ distributed in trial types, Scotland

In the following I will consider the information described above as being exact information from a sample. From this sample I will make estimates about all 3210 trials which in my terminology is called ‘the total population’, or ‘population’ for short. The sample size is 307 known sentences. If I base the calculations of 230 ‘Field Execution’, the sample size must be increased to 351.

I can then calculate two frequencies of executions for each sample:

206 of 307, giving a frequency of 67.1%

230 of 351, giving a frequency of 65.5%

The frequency can be interpreted as a probability of being executed when nothing else is

known about the cases and the trials. Depending on the interpretation of the available information, I end up with a probability of being executed of between about 66% and 67%. This is a binominal probability situation,²²⁸ and I may exploit the properties of this distribution to make prognoses about the total number. For binominal distributions it is known that the expected value depends only on probability and the number of cases. The expected value will be a point estimate. The two point estimates for the population are then:

- When probability is 67.1%, point estimate becomes 2154 (3210 x 67.1%)
- When probability is 65.5%, point estimate becomes 2103 (3210 x 65.5%)

Binominal probability distributions also have a formula for variance, which is

$$\text{var}(x) = p \cdot (1 - p) \cdot n$$

The probability *p* is one of the two probabilities used above, and *n* =3210.

This formula can be used to make a confidence interval around the point estimate. Usually the variance is converted to standard deviation according to the

formula: $SD(x) = \sqrt{\text{var}(x)}$

It is common to calculate a confidence interval as Point estimate ± 2*SD, and I will adhere to this rule.

A confidence interval can then be calculated around the two point estimates, see Table 18 below.

Executed	Sample	Frequency	Population	Lower limit	Point estimate	Higher limit
206	307	67.1%	3210	2101	2154	2207
230	351	65.5%	3210	2050	2103	2157

Table 18 Estimated executions in Scotland, with confidence intervals

Since the probabilities are fairly equal for the two alternatives, the calculated standard deviation will be similar for the two alternatives as well, and is around 26–27. The confidence interval is then slightly more than 100, and by this method I should be able to capture the true value with a probability of about 95%.

I will also investigate the number of ‘Sentence Execution’ relative to the trial types, and from this make another estimate of executions for the total population. This is my second method.

There are 2407 trials where trial types are known, and 803 unknown trials. An

²²⁸ There exist only two mutually exclusive outcomes.

alternative estimation method would be to link the number of ‘Sentence Execution’ to trial types. The following Table 19 gives the result. To make the table easier to read, I have aggregated to one type of mixed central-local trial.

Sentence	Central	Local	Mixed central - local	Unknown trial type	Total
Banishment	3	20	4		27
Branded		1			1
Declared Fugitive	9		2		11
Excommunicated		6			6
Execution	60	100	45		205
Hung		1			1
Prison	1				1
Public Humiliation		1			1
Put to the horn	2				2
Released	27	4	21		52
Unknown sentence	76	1803	221	803	2903
Total	178	1936	293	803	3210

Table 19 Combination of sentence types and trial types, Scotland

As before, I will continue with 206 as number of executions. All known ‘Sentence Execution’ are linked to known trial types, where the relevant lines in the table are set in bold face. I will estimate the number of ‘Sentence Execution’, not ‘Field Execution’. When linking ‘Sentence Execution’ to trial types, only sentences for which the trial type is known will be considered. This is a minority of the trials, especially as there are many unknown sentences for local trials. I further calculate the percentage of ‘Sentence Execution’ as a proportion of trials with known sentences. The result is shown in Table 20 below.

	Central	Local trial	Mixed central- local	Unknown trial	Total trials with known sentence
Trial type and known sentence	102	133	72	0	307
‘Sentence Execution’ in% of trial type and known sentence	58.8%	75.9%	62.5%		67.1%

Table 20 Aggregated combination of trial types and known sentences, Scotland

The number 62.5% for mixed central-local trials consists of 53% from circuit court trials and 69% from other than circuit court.

The percentage of 67.1%, which denotes total trials with ‘Sentence Execution’, is known from the first method. The new information is the relative frequency for the three known types of trial. As the frequency of trials is different, I will use these different

frequencies as weights in my calculation.

The calculation is done in two steps. First I calculate the expected number of 'Sentence Execution' within each trial group. Thus for central trials I multiply 58.8% by 178, finding an estimate of 105. The figure 178 is the total of central trials, as seen in Table 19. By the same method I estimate the number of 'Sentence Execution' for local trials as 1470 (75.9% of 1936) and for mixed local-central trials as 183 (62.5% of 293), in total 1758. This is the estimate for 2407 cases where the type of trial is known. The second step is to scale the result to 3210 trials and find an estimate of 'Sentence Execution' to be **2345**. This number is somewhat higher than what was found when using only the total (average) frequency of 67.1%. The reason is the weighting procedure used; greater weight is given to the local trials with the highest probability of being sentenced to execution.

I have also calculated the confidence interval around this estimate. I have applied the rule that the variance of a sum is the weighted sum of the variances, and assuming stochastic independence between variables. I have used as weights the frequency of the trial types, i.e. used the weight $(178/2407)^2$ for central trials, etc. When finally scaling the result to the total number of trials, I find a standard deviation of 23. The effect of weighting can explain why the standard deviation is slightly lower than previously estimated. The confidence interval around the point estimate is found by adding (deducting) two times the standard deviation from the estimated value. I find an upper limit of 2390 and a lower limit of 2299. Again it must be emphasised that I have now estimated the number of 'Sentence Execution', not 'Field Execution'.

If I try to go from 'Sentence Execution' (206) to 'Field Execution' (230), and use the method of estimation through frequency of trial types, I must distribute the difference, 24 cases, through the three trial types. Just as an experiment I have done so, and distributed 24 with 7 on central trials, 12 on local trials and 5 on mixed trials. 7, 12 and 5 is about the same proportion as 60:101:45. The idea is to distribute the 24 cases on trial types in the same ratio as 'Sentence Execution' are distributed. After making relevant adjustments to the formulae, I find a point estimate of executed of about **2400**. The estimate based on 230 is about 55 higher than the estimate of 'Sentence Execution' (206).

The third method of estimation mentioned at the beginning of section 2.5.3 will now be explained. It has been observed that the relative frequency of execution is unequal over time. The pattern is that the relative number of executions decreases during the later decades of the Scottish witch-hunt. By utilizing this observation I will, by the third method, estimate the total number of those executed in Scottish witchcraft trials.

The trials have been distributed into three separate periods of about the same length; each period is 50–54 years. The periods and distributions are illustrated in Figure 6 below. The first period (P1) is 1563–1619, the second (P2) is 1620–1674, and the third (P3) is 1675–1725. The decision made by me to split the observations in three periods utilizes the fact that execution frequency as well as composition of trials change over time. The first period captures the panics of the 1590s. The mid period captures the main panics. The third period captures a more lenient treatment of accusations.

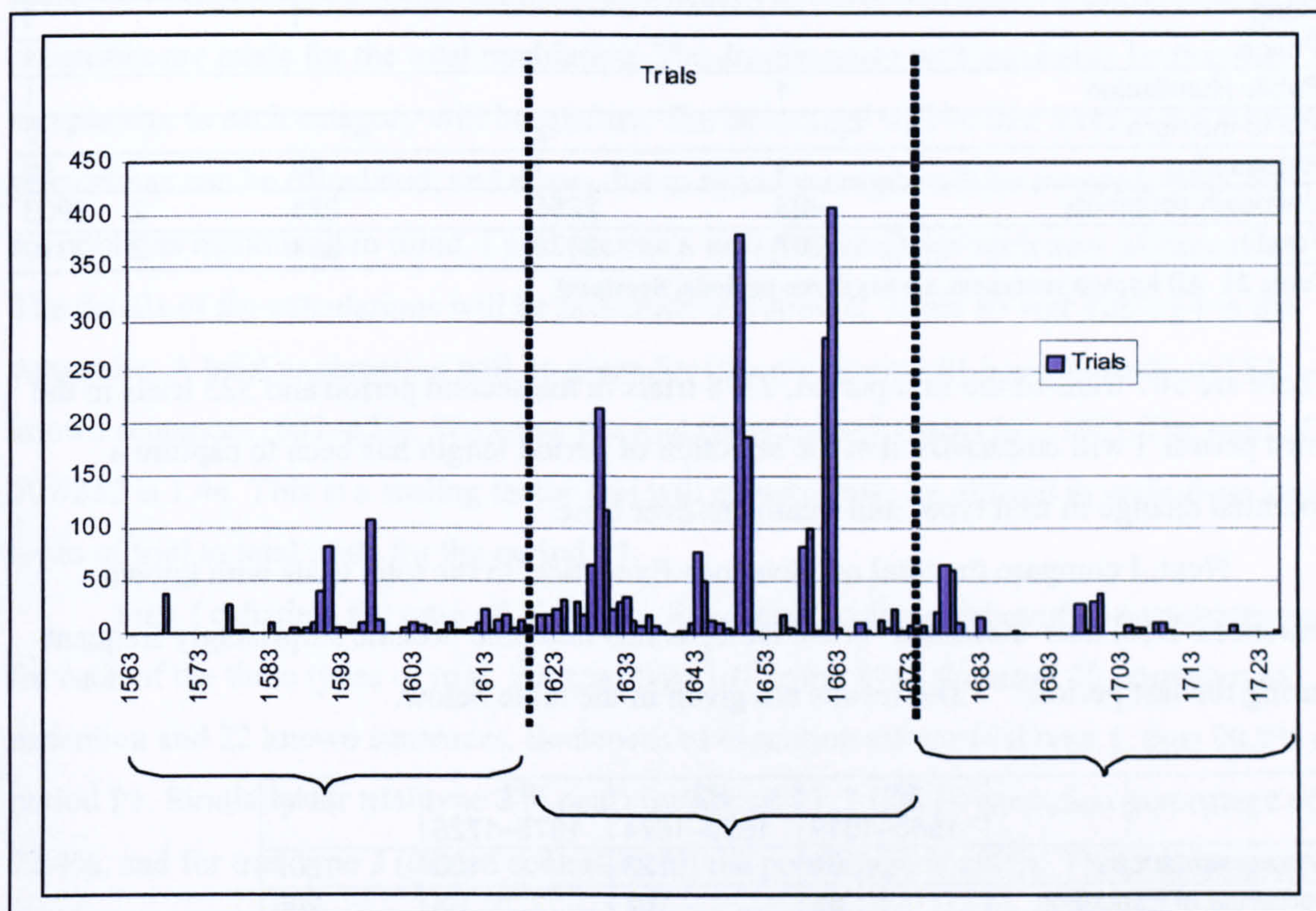


Figure 6 Witchcraft trials in Scotland into three periods of equal length

The majority of panic periods are in period P2. Also, as demonstrated previously, in the section types of trial, the composition of trials changed over time. What will now be studied are the compositions of sentences between periods. My hypothesis is that as the severity of sentences given changed dramatically, this must affect the estimates of total executions. The capital sentences were remarkably few in the last 50 years of the witch-hunt. When I now place the executions in correct periods, I find that execution rate in period P3 is far below average of 67.1% and that execution rate in P2 is particularly, but also in P1, are higher than average over the total period. As especially P2 has a large number of cases, this more detailed information of distribution of executions will result in better estimate of total executions than before. The calculations are explained in detail below.

First a table will be drawn: all sentences (307 well-documented), now distributed through the three mentioned periods, see Table 21 below:

Sentence	P1: 1563–1619	P2: 1620–1674	P3: 1675–1725	Unknown year	Total
Banishment	14	8	5		27
Branded		1			1
Declared Fugitive			11		11
Excommunicated	2	3	1		6
Execution	66	107	32		205
Hung			1		1
Prison		1			1
Public Humiliation	1				1
Put to the horn		2			2
Released	1	1	50		52
Unknown sentence	423	2255	223	2	2903
Total	507	2378	323	2	3210

Table 21 All known sentences across three periods, Scotland

There are 507 trials in the first period, 2378 trials in the second period and 323 trials in the third period. I will emphasize that the selection of period length has been to capture a potential change in trial types and treatment over time.

Next, I compare the total of ‘Sentence Execution’ to the total trials with known sentences. Note also ‘Released’ in the table, as this outcome became surprisingly frequent during the last period.²²⁹ The results are given in the table below.

	P1: 1563–1619	P2: 1620–1674	P3: 1675–1725	Total
Known sentences	84	123	100	307
Sentence of Execution and Hung	66	107	33	206
% executed of known sentences	78.6%	87.0%	33.0%	67.1%
% released of known sentences	1.2%	0.8%	50.0%	16.9%

Table 22 ‘Sentence Execution’ compared to trials with known sentences, Scotland

The total percentage of ‘Sentence Execution’ is 67.1. This is known from the analysis above. What is now demonstrated in Table 22 above is the sudden drop in the relative frequency of the ‘Sentence Execution’ in the third period. In the same period, half of the accused persons were released. This was very rare during the first 100 years of witchcraft trials in Scotland.

²²⁹ It may be argued that ‘Release’ is not a sentence, since the verdict ‘Guilty’ had not been passed. However, since the discussion of releases is a minor issue in this thesis, I will not make any changes to the registrations in SSW.

The new information about trials for the three distinct periods may be utilized to make estimates of executions. In the earlier estimates I did not utilize the fact that both the composition of trials and the severity of sentences changed over time. Average information about sentences and trials for the total period of about 150 years was applied in the calculations. Using broad averages may have some advantages as long as projections based on a sample of about 10% of the total population of about 3,200 trials and accusations are made. Now, when three distinct time periods are also introduced into the calculations, there will in effect be 9 categories on which the known sentences of execution must be distributed, before prognoses are made for the total population. The disadvantage will inevitably be that the sample size in each category will be smaller. The advantage will be that more exact relative proportions can be calculated, and errors due to broad averages will be avoided. With the reservations mentioned in mind, I will present a new prognosis for sentences of execution. The details of the calculations will be presented in Table 62, Table 63 and Table 64 in the Appendix. A brief explanation will be given for P1 only. Period P1 has 507 trials and 84 known sentences (507–423). We know the trial types for 352 trials (507–155). The ratio of 507/352 is 1.44. This is a scaling factor that will subsequently be utilized to scale from known types of trial to total trials for the period P1.

First I calculate the ratio of ‘Sentence Execution’ to the number of known sentences for each of the three types of trial. For trial type 1 (Central trial) there are 20 sentences of execution and 22 known sentences. Sentences of execution are for trial type 1, thus 90.9% in period P1. Similarly for trial type 2 (Local) for period P1, I find an execution percentage of 72.4%, and for trial type 3 (mixed central-local) the percentage is 100%. The percentages are then used to make a prognosis for the trials where the trial type is known, but not the sentence. For trial type 1, period P1, this prognosis is 90.9% multiplied by 45, giving 41. Similarly for trial type 2 I find 213 and for trial type 3 I find 13. As mentioned, these are calculations for the known types of trial, but in P1 there are altogether 155 trials of unknown type. The estimates for trial types 1–3 above are scaled up by multiplying by the scale factor 1.44 and a total estimate is found for period P1 of 384 sentences of execution. The scaling factor for P2 is 1.33 and for P3 is 1.24.

The calculations are summarized in Table 23 below:

	Central	Local	Mixed central -local	Unknown trial type	Total
Known sentence P1	22	58	4	0	
% sentence of execution of known	90.9%	72.4%	100.0%		
Prognosis for known trials	41	213	13	0	
Scaled projection including unknown trials	59	307	19	0	
				Total P1	384
Known sentence P2	29	63	31	0	
% sentence of execution of known	82.8%	87.3%	90.3%		
Prognosis for known trials	64	1368	135	0	
Scaled projection including unknown trials	85	1814	178	0	
				Total P2	2077
Known sentence P3	51	12	37	0	
% sentence of execution of known	31.4%	25.0%	35.1%		
Prognosis for known trials	18	18	46	0	
Scaled projection including unknown trials	22	23	57	0	
				Total P3	109

Table 23 ‘Sentence Execution’ compared to known sentences and trial types, Scotland

The total prognosis for sentences of execution is then: $384 + 2077 + 109 = 2570$. This is higher than the estimates presented previously for the witch-hunt in general. According to the present calculation, very close to 80% of the accused ended up with a sentence of execution. The reason for this high frequency of executions can be found in period P2, where the percentage of executions in known trials is on average 87%, and 90.3% in mixed central-local trials. However, in the same period there are 2378 trials and only 123 where the result of the trial is known. Clearly, considerable caution must be used when making prognoses on the total number of trials from such a small basis.

To sum up the different methods used to calculate executions in Scotland: I have found figures giving an execution rate from about 67% to about 80% of the accused. Based on the present quality of the data available, I doubt that a more exact number can be estimated.

When a statistical method has been used to find estimates and intervals around my estimates, I have applied known probabilities in combination with formal statistical methods. I do not present the results as more than estimates. But I have tried to apply reasonable deductions, and balanced interpretations.

Golden’s estimated average execution rate for witchcraft trials in Europe, as mentioned in the beginning of section 2.5.1, is 0.05% of the total population.²³⁰ For Scotland,

²³⁰ Golden, ‘Satan in Europe’, 20.

2,500 executed out of a population of 1 million is 0.25%, that is, five times the European average. In Finnmark 92 persons were executed out of a population of 3,000. This is 3.07%, or 60 times the European average and 13 times the Scottish average. More recent research estimates the total number of those executed in Europe within the same range as Golden.²³¹ Germany had 17,500 executions out of a population of 16 millions, which gives an average of 0.11% – half that of Scotland. Switzerland had 8,000 executed out of 1 million, which is 0.8% – almost four times the Scottish average, but only a quarter of Finnmark's average rate. A few places of limited expanse in central Europe suffered severe witchcraft persecution as well, as shown in several articles in Golden's *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft*. Johannes Dillinger's article on the Electorate of Trier shows that 800 persons were executed out of a population of 75,000. This is 1.06% of the population.²³² In the Prince-Abbey of St Maximin, situated just outside the city walls of Trier, witchcraft persecution probably ranked among the worst in the Holy Roman Empire, as shown in Rita Voltmer's article on St Maximin.²³³ 500 persons were executed out of 2200 persons living in St Maximin, which is 22.7% of the population.

2.5.4 Non-capital sentences

The Scottish witchcraft act of 1563 did not allow for non-capital sentences, according to Levack: 'Convicted Scottish witches were supposed to be executed, even though some did in fact have their sentences commuted to banishment or other forms of non-capital punishment'.²³⁴ Still, a steady if rare stream of non-capital sentences was passed throughout the witch-hunt. Table 61, Appendix, shows that banishment was a sentence seldom used, although it was distributed throughout the whole period of witch-hunt.²³⁵ This even distribution indicates that banishment was used as a sentence during both panic years and non-panic years, but that the highest numbers annually were found during panic years. In addition, 9 people in 1678 and 2 people in 1679 were declared fugitives, meaning that the authorities had not succeeded in arresting these suspects. Of miscellaneous sentences, 1 person was publicly humiliated in 1595 and 2 persons were put to the horn in 1633.

²³¹ Behringer, *Witches*, 149.

²³² Dillinger, J., 'Trier, Electorate of', in Golden, *Encyclopedia*, 4 vols., iv, 1135.

²³³ Voltmer, R., 'St Maximin, Prince-Abbey of', in Golden, *Encyclopedia*, 4 vols., iv, 1082.

²³⁴ Levack, *Witch-Hunting*, 3.

²³⁵ 1 banishment per year in 1563, 1586, 1596, 1612, 1615, 1628, 1650, 1658, 1661, 1670, 1679, 1700, 1706, 2 banishments per year in 1709, 3 ditto per year in 1598 and 1662, 6 ditto per year in 1597. The calculation is made from the number of 307 trials with verdict and sentence known.

The bulk of released persons came after the most intensive period of persecution: 1 in 1579, 1 in 1670, 4 in 1677, 1 in 1678, 9 in 1679, 1 in 1680, 1 in 1683, 7 in 1697, 25 in 1700, 1 in 1708 and 1 in 1709. These numbers indicate that the option of releasing accused persons was activated after the most intense witchcraft trials had stopped, thus showing the correspondence between the decline of witch-hunting and types of sentences passed with regard to harshness, as pointed out by Brian P. Levack, among others.²³⁶

2.6 The demonological element

2.6.1 Demonological influence

The introduction of learned demonology played an important role in the historical witch-hunt. This doctrine made its way into literature, into the laws, into the preaching of the church and into the mentality sphere of the peasants, which will be demonstrated in my qualitative analyses. The spread of demonological ideas among the learned elite through books and among the peasants by means of orally transmitted narratives and the preaching of the church prepared the ground for the type of confessions we meet during the witchcraft trials. Probably narratives about the Devil were interesting at the time and news was transmitted rapidly in the oral arena. In a study of rumour and news among those at the lower levels of society in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England, Adam Fox has shed light on the relationship between oral, manuscript and printed media. He found that the speed of the transmission of rumours and news within certain oral networks was high.²³⁷ So the spoken word was important in passing on demonological notions implied in the discourses of the law and the church to illiterate peasants and the common people as a whole.

The witchcraft confessions are rooted in an understanding of the Devil as a figure with the power of temptation, individuals as easily tempted to enter a pact with him and the pact as an individual relationship. Both the state and the church worked to make these ideas understandable and convincing to the common people. Nathan Johnstone has pointed out that the concept of the Devil underwent a process of cultural change in the hands of the Protestant reforming clergy in England, a change in which emphasis on the Devil's ability 'to enter directly into the mind and plant thoughts within it that led people to sin'.²³⁸ The weight of this image of the Devil in post-Reformation preaching, combined with the conviction of and

²³⁶ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 131–144.

²³⁷ Fox, A., 'Rumour', 597–620.

²³⁸ Johnstone, N., *The Devil and Demonism in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2006), 1.

anxiety of this powerful Devil among the learned elite are important factors to bear in mind for a researcher when trying to understand the phenomenon of demonic pact in witchcraft sources.

My hypothesis is based on the assumption that, to a certain extent, the demonological ideology plays a superior role among the factors that influenced witchcraft persecution. I see the influence from learned demonology coming to the fore during witchcraft trials, both in the form of direct influence from the interrogators during witchcraft trials, and in the form of knowledge about demonology among the accused.

In this section I will focus on the influence of demonology on Scottish witchcraft trials, highlighting demonological features in the confessions, the naming of others and finally the gender bias of demonological confessions. Due to what Brian P. Levack very appropriately calls the ‘cumulative concept of witchcraft’,²³⁹ in which a pact with the Devil, the Sabbath, night flights and metamorphosis are central ideas, demonological notions were very important drives behind the witchcraft trials, and an important reason for the increase in cases during the panics. The connection between magic and the demonic pact was a very dangerous one. ‘Not only did the pact provide the basis of the legal definition of the crime of witchcraft in many jurisdictions but it also served as the main link between the practice of harmful magic and the alleged worship of the Devil’, as Levack puts it.²⁴⁰

2.6.2 Demonological confessions

Demonic pact confessions in the Scottish material have been studied by several scholars, among them Stuart Macdonald and Lauren Martin. They come to different conclusions when discussing this theme, a fact that reminds us of the difficulties inherent in the sources when it comes to success or failure in following up lines of demonic questioning. Macdonald’s study from Fife, based on burgh records, church records and presbytery records from the local communities, as well as a few cases from justiciary court records, concludes that the Scottish populace did not readily accept demonological notions.²⁴¹ Martin maintains that the demonic pact was ‘read’ into the neighbourhood by ministers, magistrates and prosecutors, and that it ‘is unclear to what extent local accusers believed in the demonic pact’.²⁴² She bases her study

²³⁹ Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 32–51.

²⁴⁰ Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 37.

²⁴¹ Macdonald, ‘In search of the Devil in Fife’, in Goodare, *The Scottish witch-hunt in context*, 47. Presumably Macdonald’s result is due to the range of sources he has used, as confessions from local courts are not included in his study.

²⁴² Martin, ‘The Devil’, 75.

on central sources and demonological treatises. Due to the demonic pact element of the sexual relation with the Devil, frequently found in Scottish witchcraft cases, Martin emphasises the heterosexuality of the demonic pact and the structural resemblance between the demonic pact and marriage – thus bringing the Devil within the sphere of women and the household, related to local quarrels followed by magical harm. I find it more convincing to see the demonic pact in the light of period-specific demonological notions and religious preaching in the post-Reformation era.

In the following I have used data from WDB_DemonicPact, and also in some tables linked to WDB_Trials for trial types, WDB_Accused for names and WDB_Case to find the case year.

	Total
New person	323
Same person mentioned again	638
Grand Total	961

Table 24 Demonic pact confessions, Scotland

There are 961 registered instances of demonic pact confession in SSW, see Table 24 above. Many people confessed to more than one aspect of demonic pact. In total 961 demonic pact confessions are registered in SSW. These figures are related to 353 different people confessing the demonic pact.

Details of demonic type confessions in SSW are listed in Table 25 below.

Demonic type	Total
Anti-baptism	215
Devil's Mark	165
Sex	133
Servant	123
New name	96
Head and foot	68
Body and soul	60
Paction	45
Want nothing	43
Tacit pact	6
Bond/Band	3
Kisses Devil's bottom	2
Unknown	1
Possession	1
Grand Total	961

Table 25 Demonic type confessions, Scotland

The content of demonic pact confessions registered in SSW covers several of the details known from learned demonology. 'Paction' refers to confession of a covenant between the accused person and the Devil. This pact was sometimes sealed by a ritual, in which the individual entering the pact held a certain posture and promised to be the servant of the Devil from the top of her head to the sole of her foot; from this ritual came the labels 'Body and Soul' and 'Head and Foot'. The Christian baptism was renounced and the person was given a new name by the Devil, as is seen in the confession elements 'Anti-baptism' and 'New name'. In some cases the person entering the pact kissed the Devil's bottom as a sign of obedience. Sometimes the pact was accompanied by the Devil putting his mark on the person's body, hence the label 'Devil's mark'. Sex with the Devil was often confessed in relation to entering the pact, often in connection with witches' meetings. Often the Devil promised that the person entering the pact with him should 'Want nothing', which means that all that this person needed would be provided.

As seen from Table 25, the stress upon witches becoming enemies of God when they entered the pact with the Devil was strong. Renouncing Christian baptism and getting a new name, thus becoming the child of the Evil One, is mentioned by more than two-thirds of those whose confessions are recorded. This important feature of the Scottish witch-hunt is emphasised in Christina Larner's study, whose title, *Enemies of God*, sheds lights on her arguments: 'This book is about the women and men (in a ratio of about four to one) who, during this period, were identified by their neighbours, their ministers and elders, their landlords, and the officials of their government, as enemies of God'.²⁴³ Larner saw the European witch in this light – 'an enemy of God and the godly society'.²⁴⁴

Most of the demonic aspects mentioned in SSW have to do with the ritual of the pact, elements frequently mentioned in the confessions. This signals the emphasis placed during the interrogation on rituals related to the pact, a parallel to the ritual of baptism. The demonological ideas in the confessions give insights into the accused person's knowledge of detailed demonology. Even if demonological ideas were brought to the fore during the interrogation by leading questions, those confessing must have known these notions before they entered the courtroom, according to the richness of detail given in the confessions. The

²⁴³ Larner, *Enemies*, 5.

²⁴⁴ Larner, *Enemies*, 5.

data support the emphasis placed by Christina Lerner among others on post-Reformation religious elements, in terms of a personal relationship between an individual and God as contributory to the demonological confessions.²⁴⁵ Also of interest is the Protestant view of the Holy Communion as symbolic; as pointed out by Levack the elements of the ritual are signs 'rather than the effectual means of God's grace'.²⁴⁶ Inversion of religious motifs touched upon during the denial of baptism during the pact ritual may be seen here as an allusion to the Holy Communion. The theme of inversion has been treated by Stuart Clark and Christina Lerner, among others. It has been pointed out by Lerner that inversion and worship known from religious services was part of the formal pact that took place at meetings.²⁴⁷ This inversion is clearly an important aspect of the demonic pact and probably contributed to a kind of solemnity attached to the description of entering the pact.

Demonic pact in relation to trial types will be studied next, see Table 26 below.²⁴⁸

Demonic Type	Trial Type				
	Central	Local	Mixed central-local	Unknown trial type	Total
Anti-baptism	47	108	67	82	304
Body and soul	14	33	15	19	81
Bond/Band	1	2		1	4
Devil's Mark	32	73	63	57	225
Head and foot	32	24	12	33	101
Kisses Devil's bottom		2		1	3
New name	14	56	27	37	134
Paction	5	32	10	13	60
Possession		1			1
Servant	37	64	25	57	183
Sex	31	78	26	54	189
Tacit pact	2	3	1	3	9
Want nothing	14	19	11	22	66
Unknown		1			1
Total	229	496	257	379	1361
Total trials	178	1936	293	803	3210

Table 26 Aspects of demonic pacts and trial types, Scotland

²⁴⁵ Lerner, *Enemies*, 25.

²⁴⁶ Levack, *Witch-Hunting*, 46.

²⁴⁷ Lerner, *Enemies*, 153; Clark, S., 'Inversion, misrule and the meaning of witchcraft', *Past and Present*, no. 87 (1980), 98-127.

²⁴⁸ There are several examples in SSW that seemingly the same person has been identified with same type of DemonicPact and same case date, but registered with different types of trials.

The total frequency of DemonicPact is not proportional to the total number of trial types. There is seemingly a large under-representation of demonic pacts in local trials. I will presume this is mainly due to lack of registrations (missing sources) from local trials. Central trials are better documented. The total proportion of DemonicPact will therefore most likely be in line with the registrations from central trials rather than the proportions from other types of trial. Trial type 1 (Central trial) has 229 registrations of DemonicPact in 178 trials. This indicates about 1.3 registrations in average per trial. For local trials I find about one mention in every four trials. In my assessment, the latter proportion is unrealistically low. One would expect more DemonicPact in local trials than in other types of trial, based on the finding that local trials were very frequent in panic years, and also that the naming of other witches was strongly connected to local trials.

2.6.3 Witches' meetings

In order for witchcraft panics to arise, there must be a link between an individual pact and a collective element. This multiplier effect is recognizable in the notion of the witches' meeting or witches' sabbath. Accused individuals confessed that they had attended a witches' meeting, something which enabled a panic to spread rapidly, because the accused named the other people attending the meeting. These persons were interrogated in turn, giving rise to linked trials.

The contents of witches' meetings as elements of confessions is registered by SSW and given in Table 27 below. Among women, 213 confessed to having attended witches' meetings; among men 28 confessed to having attended the same. 199 women and 27 men confessed that the Devil was present at the meeting.

	Female	Male
Witches' Meeting	213	28
Devil present	199	27
Dancing	92	16
Maleficium	25	2
Food and Drink	21	5
Singing	14	1
Devil Worship	6	1
Communal Sex	4	1

Table 27 Contents of witches' meetings as elements of confessions, Scotland

Often the witches' meetings were narrated in great detail, like the narratives describing the demonic pact mentioned above. The data show that in addition to the Devil's presence, dancing, singing and food and drink were confessed to have been elements of witches'

meetings. There is often an aspect of merriment related to the witches’ meetings, as well as some areas of ‘illegal’ activities, like ‘Communal sex’. When ‘Food and drink’ are mentioned at witches’ meetings, it is viewed by Lamer not only as an allusion to the Holy Communion, but as reinforcing the standard account of the witches’ meeting as an account of disorder: eating, drinking and dancing.²⁴⁹ This merriment related to the witches’ meeting, which will also be found in Finnmark, supports an assumption that narratives of the meetings might be seen as an expression of a break with daily routines and a longing for joy and amusement.

Maleficium as part of witches’ meetings is explained in SSW as ‘Collective *maleficium* organised or committed at a meeting’.²⁵⁰ Malefice, sorcery performed in order to hurt others as part of witches’ meetings, is similar to collective sorcery operations found in the witchcraft material from northern Norway, as will be discussed in a later chapter.

2.6.4 Naming other witches

An accused person often named other people who took part in the meeting and thereby gave the names of accomplices and further suspects to be interrogated. The multiplying mechanism of the witches’ meeting is of great importance and on this hinge – the sudden emergence of many names – rests the possibility of a panic spreading rapidly, a fact mentioned e.g. by Goodare.²⁵¹

In SSW, registration has been made of those who were implicated by another person. Even if the word ‘witch’ is not mentioned, the meaning must be, implicated by another person accused of witchcraft.²⁵² The registration is made as both primary and secondary characterisation, see Table 28.²⁵³ It should be noted that ‘Not implicated by another’ means ‘no evidence of being implicated’.

	ImplicatedByAnother_secondary		
ImplicatedByAnother_primary	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Total
Not mentioned	2465	916	3381
Mentioned		32	32
Total	2465	948	3413

Table 28 Implicated by another witch, Scotland (SSW)

²⁴⁹ Lamer, *Enemies*, 153.
²⁵⁰ The Survey. DDD, 18.
²⁵¹ Goodare, ‘Witch-hunting and the Scottish state’, 137.
²⁵² ImplicatedByAnother_p; ImplicatedBy Another_s. Found in the table WDB_Case.
²⁵³ In SSW ‘primary characterisation’ is defined as ‘The team decided this was the main theme’. ‘Secondary characterisation is defined as ‘the team found this mentioned in the sources’.

Primary characterisation has only 32 cases, while secondary characterisation has 948 cases.²⁵⁴ The ‘secondary’ cases include all ‘primary’ cases. From what has been emphasised above concerning the nature of witchcraft denunciations, it seems probable that there is a connection between denunciations and panic years. I make the calculations with ‘secondary’ cases only, as ‘primary’ is a true subset of ‘secondary’. The result is shown in Table 29 below.

	ImplicatedByAnother_secondary		
Panics	Not Mentioned	Mentioned	Total
Non-panic Years	986	205	1191
Panic Years	1479	743	2222
Total	2465	948	3413

Table 29 Implicated by another witch versus panic years, Scotland (SSW)

In panic years the ratio between those who were implicated by another witch and those who were not implicated is 2:1 (1479:743). In a non-panic year the proportion is close to 5:1 (986:205). When tested statistically, the result is significant, see Table 66, Appendix.²⁵⁵ There is a strong statistical correlation between periods when accused individuals were implicated by another person and the panic periods defined above. This means that in panic years there was a greater chance of being implicated as a person suspected of witchcraft than in non-panic years, which is logical, as the multiplying mechanism of demonology flourished during these periods.

The decrease in demonological confessions towards the end of the witch-hunt is again related to the more restricted use of torture during the late period, pointed out by Larnier as well as Levack.²⁵⁶ An aspect of this reduction – the relation between reduction in denunciations and reduction in trials – may be illuminated from one angle by looking at the frequency of naming others in different types of trial during the last period of the Scottish witch-hunt. In 1677 it was documented that 13 people were tried in local trials.²⁵⁷ Only 1 was implicated by another.²⁵⁸ In 1678 half the number of the 10 tried in local trials were implicated by others.²⁵⁹ In 1679, 2 individuals out of 7 in local trials were implicated by others.²⁶⁰ In 1700, there were 11 local trials, 1 in Dumfries and 10 in Ross. None of the accused persons was implicated by another. After 1700 the number of local trials did not

²⁵⁴ The total number of cases, 3413, includes double registrations of names. There are 367 cases of same name or unknown name.
²⁵⁵ Chi-square 101.762.
²⁵⁶ Larnier, *Enemies*, 108; Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 138–41.
²⁵⁷ 5 in Dunbarton, 4 in Stirling, 2 in Haddington, 1 in Argyll and 1 in Renfrew.
²⁵⁸ Marion Phin, Haddington.
²⁵⁹ 2 in Edinburgh and 3 in Haddington.
²⁶⁰ Annapple Thomson and William Craw, Linlithgow.

reach more than 5 per year. In 1709 there was 1 local trial in Dumfries, with no-one implicated by another person, and in 1719 there were 6 local trials, all in Caithness, in which no person was implicated by another.

Central trials occurred particularly in 1678 and 1700 during the late period of the witch-hunt. In 1678, 13 people out of 22 tried in central trials were implicated by others. In 1700, 6 out of 25 people tried in central cases were implicated by others. After 1700 there were no central trials. The tendency in central trials with regard to the naming of other suspected witches seems to decrease when it comes to the end of the century.

During the period 1675–1725, the tendency continued, in that there were few suspected witches implicated by others in mixed central-local trials. In 1677, none of the accused in mixed central-local trials was implicated by others. In 1679 only 1 out of 35 people tried in mixed central-local trials was implicated by someone else (secondary characterisation).²⁶¹ In 1683 none of the 15 people tried in mixed central-local trials was implicated by others. In 1697, where in Renfrew 27 people in total were tried in mixed central-local trials, 21 are registered as having been implicated by another person (secondary characterisation). In 1699 I find that 23 people were tried in mixed central-local trials in Renfrew and Lanark. Of these, only two were implicated by others.²⁶² For mixed central-local trials the pattern seems to be that very few accused people were implicated by others during the late period of the witch-hunt. The exception is the year 1697 in Renfrew, a very special case. A laird's eleven-year-old daughter accused a number of her father's servants, tenants and tenants' children of bewitching her. Seven out of 20 people accused were executed. Other cases arising from this one came up as late as 1699.²⁶³

The conclusion is that when examining the frequency of the naming of other people at the end of the witch-hunt, the link between denunciation and demonology is strengthened. For local trials the pattern seems to be that naming other suspected individuals occurs until 1700, but the number of suspected witches never explodes, as we saw to be the case in previous panic years. This seems to indicate that denunciation of others, which is closely connected to demonological confessions of witches' meetings, decreases towards the end of the witch-hunt.

²⁶¹ Jannet Hunter, Haddington.

²⁶² Issobel Henryson, Elspeth Wilson.

²⁶³ Larner, *Enemies*, 77.

2.6.5 Demonological confessions and gender

In this section I would like to focus on confessions of demonic pact related to gender.

	Sex		
	Female	Male	Total
New person	319	34	353
Same person mentioned again	565	43	608
Total	884	77	961

Table 30 Demonic pacts and gender, Scotland

Table 30 above shows that of the 961 demonic pact confessions, 884 (92%) were related to women and 77 to men (8%). It should be remembered that the figure 961 covers several aspects of demonic pact confessions; in total 353 people were recorded as confessing to the demonic pact. Compared to the relative gender distribution in the Scottish witchcraft material, 83.9% women and 14.5% men, the proportion of women confessing to the demonic pact is higher than expected. But it is also important to be aware that men confessed to the demonic pact, thus making it more difficult to argue for a particular connection between women, marriage and the concept of the demonic pact.

An argument in this thesis is that demonological trials were very dangerous because of the implicit potential for panic outbursts. My assumption is that there is a relation between the demonological element and panic periods.

Count of DemonicRef	Gender		
	Female	Male	Total
Panic years			
Non-panic years	113	17	130
Panic years	206	17	223
Total	319	34	353

Table 31 Demonic pact confession, panic years and gender, Scotland

Table 31 shows that there are almost twice as many females confessing demonic pact in panic years compared to non-panic years. This finding is very much in parallel with the total number of women in panic versus non-panic years. Men are under-represented in panic years with regard to demonic pact confessions.

The highest numbers of individual demonic pact confessions are found in panic years: 1590–1 with 5 demonic pact confessions, 1597 with 9 confessions, 1628–30 with 26

confessions, 1643–4 with 9 confessions, 1649–50 with 61 confessions, 1658–9 with 36 confessions, 1661–2 with 77 confessions. In addition, in 1678 there are 16 confessions and in 1697 there are 19 confessions, see Table 67, Appendix. The frequency of demonic pact confessions thus follows the upsurge of panics. These findings draw the attention to the presence of the demonological element throughout the seventeenth century, including after the last panic year. My interpretation is that demonological ideas continued to live strongly as part of the mentality sphere of the common people after interest in witchcraft persecution had decreased among legal officials. This indicates that the oral transmission of demonological notions and their potential to remain in the oral arena for a long period of time are important points to be aware of when the complex factors influencing witchcraft trials are analysed.

2.7 Torture

2.7.1 General

The extensive use of torture during witchcraft trials in Scotland is an important argument for the severity of the witch-hunt, as argued for example by Levack. The use of torture was of the highest importance for the development and outcome of a witchcraft trial. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, I will argue that the use of torture in Scotland as well as in Finnmark was one of the main reasons for the increase in witchcraft trials during panic periods, and for the intensity of the witch-hunt as such in the two regions. Torture was used during the interrogation of those suspected of being witches mainly to extract demonological confessions and to extract the names of accomplices who had attended witches' meetings or taken part in collective sorcery operations. This view is in accordance with studies of the Scottish witch-hunt by Larner, Levack, Macfarlane and Thomas. There is consensus among scholars that severe torture took place during witchcraft trials in Scotland.

For definition of the term 'torture' I follow Langbein, 'the use of physical coercion by officers of the state in order to gather evidence for judicial proceedings'.²⁶⁴ Then there is the question: What kind of torture methods are included in the term 'torture'? Here different scholars give different answers. There seems to be a consensus that the use of physical methods like the rack, the boots and the thumbscrews are to be reckoned as torture. SSW includes the use of stocks as torture, and I follow this in my analyses. It may be argued that use of stocks not necessarily implied physical coercion. Still there might be situations during

²⁶⁴ Langbein, *Torture and the Law of Proof* (Chicago, 2006), 3.

imprisonment of witches when the use of stocks functioned in the same way as torture, so in my opinion it might be argued that stocks could be considered as torture. The meanings are also different as to whether waking and witch-pricking should be considered as torture.

Several scholars argue that these two methods should be included in torture. Levack maintains that both of these should be considered as torture.²⁶⁵ Lamer argues that sleep deprivation and pricking for marks are distinct from direct torture.²⁶⁶ Stuart Macdonald argues for a broad definition of torture including six elements: judicial torture, witch-pricking, sleep deprivation, harsh jail conditions, mob violence and the method of execution. I think the last three points are too general to be included in the term torture as defined above. In particular, the pricking of a witch has been regarded in different ways within witchcraft research. Anna Cordey includes witch pricking in torture, arguing that the accused persons confessed just after witch pricking.²⁶⁷ Witch-pricking had to do with finding an insensitive spot on the suspected person's body which did not bleed.²⁶⁸ In Scotland professional witch-prickers, of whom John Kincaid was the most famous, travelled from place to place to prick witches.²⁶⁹ S. W. McDonald discusses, with a basis in secondary sources, these alleged insensitive spots.²⁷⁰ He mentions that the witch-prickers might have looked for insensitive tissues, old scars etc., but also notes that the pricked person 'may have voluntarily suppressed any display of pain in order to get the search over with'.²⁷¹ Anyway, the use of pricking in order to obtain a 'proof' that the accused had entered a pact with the Devil was a shrewd way of obtaining evidence. In SSW waking is included in torture, but not witch-pricking. As these data will be the basis for my statistical treatment, my calculations will not include witch-pricking as torture.

2.7.2 Documentation

To what extent was torture used in Scottish witchcraft trials? Due to lack of documentation of torture in the sources, this is a difficult question to answer. The lack of documentation occurs for two main reasons. Firstly, in the majority of cases torture was used illegally during Scottish witchcraft trials and therefore was not entered to its full extent in the records, as will be discussed below. Secondly, it is linked to the general situation regarding witchcraft trials in Scotland, where the bulk of primary sources is missing, especially those from local courts.

²⁶⁵ Levack, 'Torture', in Golden, *Encyclopedia*, 4 vols., iv, 1129; Levack, *Witch-Hunting*, 23.

²⁶⁶ Lamer, *Enemies*, 114–15.

²⁶⁷ Cordey, *Witch-hunting*, 60.

²⁶⁸ Goodare, J., 'Pricking of suspected witches', in Golden, *Encyclopedia*, 4 vols., iii, 930–2.

²⁶⁹ Lamer, *Enemies*, 76.

²⁷⁰ McDonald, 'The Devil's Mark', 507–10.

²⁷¹ McDonald, 'The Devil's Mark', 510.

Nevertheless, the sample of documented torture cases that remains may give an indication of the types of torture used, the types of trial in which it was used, and whether it was used during interrogation before the actual beginning of the trial. The gender question will be followed throughout.

Documentation of torture in Scottish witchcraft trials is found in primary sources as well as in secondary sources, mentioned for instance by Melville, Lerner, Levack, Macdonald and Maxwell-Stuart.²⁷² While Maxwell-Stuart tends to minimise torture as a whole, the relationship between torture and the number of accused in Scotland is underlined by several of the other scholars. Levack argues that torture was one of the most important reasons why the witch-hunt in Scotland became so intense.²⁷³ He states that torture was frequently used in Scottish criminal cases during the second half of the seventeenth century, contributing to an identification of Scottish criminal justice with that of continental European countries, where torture was often used on a regular basis. In Scotland, torture was evident in the prosecution of two types of crime, witchcraft and treason. Levack gives several examples of extensive judicial torture during the 1650s and early 1660s. The privy council had to intervene to stop judicial torture in witchcraft cases. During the 1660s the privy council found it necessary to prohibit local magistrates from torturing witches and to take action against those who violated that prohibition. In 1708 torture in Scotland was prohibited by an Act of the British Parliament.

The official use of torture in the Scottish courts was very restricted. It was only legal in criminal trials if a special warrant from the privy council had been granted. In addition, warrants could come from the Scottish parliament, because the privy council was inactive when the parliament had sessions. The privy council issued such warrants 'when they considered information from the accused to be vital to the state'.²⁷⁴ These might be crimes of a political nature, such as 'treason, rebellion, sedition, attacks on prominent statesmen, and religious subversion'.²⁷⁵ In addition there was witchcraft, which was considered a crime as serious as those mentioned. In contrast to England, torture was used during witchcraft prosecutions in Scotland. But because the necessary warrant from the privy council was not granted in the majority of cases, this use of torture was not legal. Levack points to the

²⁷² Melville, R. D., 'The Use and Forms of Judicial Torture in England and Scotland', *SHR*, 2 (1905), 225–48; Lerner, *Enemies*, 107–109; Levack, 'Judicial Torture', 185–98; Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 22–23; Macdonald, S., 'Torture and the Scottish Witch-hunt: A Re-examination', *Scottish Tradition*, 28 (2002), 95–114; Maxwell-Stuart, *Satan's Conspiracy*, 74–75.

²⁷³ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 21.

²⁷⁴ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 22.

²⁷⁵ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 22.

astonishing fact that during the whole period of the witch-hunt in Scotland only two warrants to use torture in witchcraft cases were granted, one in 1591 and the other in 1610: 'In all other Scottish witchcraft prosecutions in which torture was reportedly used the privy council did not grant the required warrants. For that reason these applications of torture were technically illegal'.²⁷⁶ As comes clearly to the fore in SSW, torture is only mentioned sporadically in the Scottish witchcraft sources, something which probably reflects the fact that the use of torture during witchcraft trials was in fact illegal. What is documented in SSW must be regarded as incidences of reported torture; the actual figure was probably much higher. However, the lack of complete documentation of torture in the sources makes it difficult to perform statistical calculations. Close-reading of sources shows that torture might be implicated as more 'hidden' formulations in the documents. This is one of the issues dealt with in my thesis which benefits from a close-reading, something which will be exemplified in further detail during the qualitative analyses of the sources.

Macdonald is reserved with regard to the extent of torture.²⁷⁷ He maintains that in his study from Fife the data show no clear evidence of direct torture or judicial torture. However, he points out that witch-pricking and sleep deprivation 'were adequate to drive the witch-hunt'.²⁷⁸ If one includes waking among torture methods, torture was in use in Fife. If we also include witch-pricking, torture was definitely in use. So it is really Macdonald's definition of torture that is the reason for his argument that torture was not in use in Fife. In SSW the occurrences in Fife are in fact registered as torture. It might be correct to say, according to Macdonald's definition, that 'direct torture' was not documented in the sources, but other types of torture were.

In SSW torture is registered in table WDB_Torture, with 110 cases. When torture is linked to trials, I find the 110 occurrences of registered torture to represent 52 trials. Table WDB_Torture can naturally also be linked to table WDB_Accused which gives the bibliographical information of a particular person. Thus linked, there were seemingly 136 cases of torture, but after closer inspection, only 52 distinct AccusedRef (Each person has a separate AccusedRef code in SSW). It is thus confirmed that 52 individuals were reported tortured. When the 52 accused are studied in more detail, I find that 14 individuals, representing 23 torture cases, probably have double registrations.²⁷⁹ I will therefore in this

²⁷⁶ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 22.

²⁷⁷ Macdonald, 'Torture', 96.

²⁷⁸ Macdonald, 'Torture', 101.

²⁷⁹ The 23 cases are all related to 'unknown' trial types. I have found the same person, same Res country, same Torture Ref identifier, with the only difference being categorization of trial type. All the 14 individuals

section proceed with an analysis of 110 torture cases representing 52 individuals rather than 136 cases. A result is that all torture related to ‘unknown’ trial types has now been removed.

As there are more documented cases of torture than individuals being tortured, some people were tortured in several ways. Having in mind the above findings related to types of trial, confessions, panic years and gender, it is interesting to ask which types of trial dominated when torture was used. Looking at the 110 cases of torture, we see from Table 32 below the spread with regard to types of trial and gender. It should be born in mind that because the bulk of court records from local trials have not survived, the 110 cases do not show the full extent of torture. Still the data give evidence that torture took place in all types of trial, and that women as well as men were tortured.

Count of TortureRef	Gender			
Trial Type	Female	Male	Unknown gender	Total
Central	3	2	0	5
Local	83	1	5	89
Mixed central-local	14	2		16
Total	100	5	5	110

Table 32 Torture cases, gender and types of trial, Scotland

Table 32 illustrates that 100 out of 110 cases of torture affected women. Most of the torture occurred in local trials. Of these, 83 cases affected women, 1 affected a man and 5 affected individuals of unknown gender. 14.5% of torture cases took place in mixed central-local trials: 14 cases affected women and 2 affected men. In central trials five torture cases were registered, three related to women and two related to men. These numbers indicate that most cases of torture took place in local trials and affected women.

Of 46 women exposed to torture, 67% were tortured in local trials, 26% in mixed central-local courts, and the rest in the central courts, as is seen from Table 33 below.

Of the 52 individuals who are documented as having been tortured according to SSW 88% were women, 10% were men and 2% are unknown, suggesting that the likelihood of an accused man being tortured was less than the likelihood of an accused woman being tortured.

mentioned have identical registration in one of the three trial types and simultaneously in ‘unknown’ trials. As information on torture is found in trial documents, it is unlikely that a trial for which knowledge of torture is documented does not have information on trial type. In addition, there are two individuals for whom a different number of tortures are registered under ‘unknown’ trial type compared to the known trial type. 26 registrations of torture are double registrations probably due to registration of unknown type of trial when the trial type is actually known. AccusedRef A/EGD/1657 is tortured with five different torture methods. The same person is registered as trial T/JO/987 and T/JO/596. The first is trial type 2 (Local) and the second in trial type 4 (unknown).

From the small sample I find that men were tortured once, but women were tortured repeatedly.

	Women	Men	Unknown	Total
Central	3	2		5
Local	31	1	1	33
Mixed	12	2		14
Total	46	5	1	52

Table 33 Tortured individuals, Scotland

For both Table 32 and Table 33 above the general pattern is that men were reported tortured less than women in relation to what we know about the proportion of men in Scottish witchcraft cases in general. In Scotland men comprised 15% of the accused in witchcraft trials. However, men comprise 4.5% of the reported torture cases, see Table 32, but 10% of tortured individuals, see Table 33. The number of torture cases linked to men is remarkably low. But we have to bear in mind that the number of reported cases affected only 52 individuals, which is a very small sample compared to the total number of accused.

It can be noted that torture was documented as being in use from the early witchcraft cases of the 1590s onwards. There is documentation of intermittent use in the decades after 1620 and frequent use during the panics of 1661–2. It is interesting to note that torture was registered as being used in the 1670s and the 1680s, not long before it was abolished.

2.7.3 Torture methods

Melville mentions a variety of Scottish torture methods, ‘the rack, the thumbscrew, the pilniewinkis or pinniwinks, the boot, the cashilawis or caspitaws or caspicaws, the “long irons”, the “waking”, the “Turkas”, needles, scourging, breaking on the wheel, burning, strangulation, mutilation, dismemberment, flaying, and many other ingenious minor varieties, such as, for example, wreching (“thrawing”) the head with ropes, specially resorted to in dealing with cases of witchcraft’.²⁸⁰ ‘Thrawing’ is mentioned in connection with several early cases.²⁸¹ Of the 110 cases of torture mentioned in SSW, the most common types were sleep deprivation (23), burning feet (14), bound with ropes (12), hanging by thumbs (12), whip (12) and stocks (9). Irons is mentioned in 3 cases, and bow strings, cashielaws, haircloth, tied to pole and wedges on the shins are mentioned in 1 case each. One person could be tortured with up to five different torture methods.

²⁸⁰ Melville, ‘Judicial Torture in England and Scotland’, 236.
²⁸¹ Both Fean and Angus Sampson are reported to have been ‘thrawn’ according to *Newes of Scotland*.

There is clear evidence that use of torture had the wanted effect, which can be seen by comparing the chronology of the date of torture and the date of accusation. Torture was mostly used to extract confessions in order to apply to the privy council for a commission for trying witches. Thus one would expect torture dates to precede case dates, as torture was necessary to make suspected individuals confess before the kirk session at a very early stage of the process. Judging from the sample of torture cases in SSW, this was the case, as demonstrated in Table 68, Appendix.²⁸² Of those persons who were reportedly tortured, 18 were tortured before the case dates, one was tortured after the case date,²⁸³ and for four individuals we do not know, due to lack of information about the accurate torture date. What we do know, is that they were tortured in the same year and in the same month as the trial.²⁸⁴ This illustrates clearly that suspected people were tortured as part of the interrogation before the trial was a fact. Their confession was necessary to the local judges when they applied for a commission to try witches in local communities. Therefore this too is a good demonstration that pressure to try witches in the first place came from local communities.

Summing up, the findings made in the analyses of torture during Scottish witchcraft trials support my hypothesis. Torture is documented as having played a part during the witch-hunt. Torture as part of the interrogation before the trial started was frequent. Severe methods of torture were used to extract confessions. There is a connection between the use of torture and panic years.²⁸⁵ Torture affected mostly women and took place mostly in local trials. The use of torture decreased drastically after 1662. It must be noted that the findings are based on a small sample of trials. Related to the analyses above of panic years, execution rates, the demonological element, types of trial and gender, the results support an interpretation of the witch-hunt as influenced by several factors, with the use of torture playing an important part in extracting confessions. This will be analysed in further detail in the qualitative analyses.

2.8 Neighbourhood disputes

The link between witchcraft accusations in local communities and the implementation of governmental and clerical control has attracted much attention among witchcraft scholars. Lerner, Martin, Briggs, Goodare and Cordey have all emphasised the social context in their studies. There is no doubt that the local community is an important arena to look into to find

²⁸² Date of torture is registered by month and year, while case date is registered by date, month and year.

²⁸³ Kathrine Remy, 1658.

²⁸⁴ Alesoun Balfour, 1594; Agneis Kirkland, 1650; Kathrine Remy, 1658 (tortured several times); David Stewart, 1650.

²⁸⁵ 32 of the 52 tortured persons are registered in panic years.

explanations for the witch-hunt, especially as regards the start of witchcraft accusations and the role of neighbours’ testimonies during the trials.

In SSW, neighbourhood disputes are registered as either neighbourhood dispute primary or secondary, denoting these disputes as being a primary or secondary characterization of the trial. The two categories overlap and I will follow neighbourhood dispute secondary, which is the largest, in my analyses. In WDB-accused there are 120 cases of neighbourhood dispute_s (secondary characterisation).

Count of AccusedRef	Neighbhd_dispute_s		
Sex	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Total
Female	2585	113	2698
Male	461	7	468
Gender unknown	46		46
Grand Total	3092	120	3212

Table 34 Neighbourhood disputes and gender, Scotland

Out of 120 persons, 113 women and 7 men are mentioned in relation to neighbourhood disputes, see Table 34, which mean that we are largely within the circles of women when it comes to disputes of this kind caught by the legal system during witchcraft trials. This fact points to the female context as important for witchcraft accusations.

The cross-tabulation between neighbourhood disputes and trial types is seen in the following Table 35.

Count of AccusedRef	TrialType				
Neighbhd_dispute_s	Central	Local	Mixed central- local	Unknown trial type	Total
Not mentioned	143	1877	262	773	3055
Mentioned	35	59	31	30	155
Total	178	1936	293	803	3210

Table 35 Neighbourhood disputes and trial type, Scotland

There are 155 trials in which neighbourhood disputes (secondary characterisation) are mentioned. The reason why I get a higher number here than the 120 in Table 35 above is that the same person may be linked to more than one trial. The table shows that neighbourhood disputes are mentioned in all trial types. For local trials we can suspect that sources may be missing.

The frequency of neighbourhood disputes over time is illustrated in Table 69, Appendix. The flow of neighbourhood quarrels can be seen throughout the whole period of the witch-hunt. As is seen from see Table 70, Appendix, there is no indication that

neighbourhood disputes were increasing during panic periods.²⁸⁶ This finding supports an assumption that in the local communities, scolding for witchcraft was a constant phenomenon during the years of the witch-hunt. This indicates that peasants knew the severity of this type of accusation and that scolding for witchcraft was rooted in conflicts in daily life situations.

Out of the total of sentences documented in SSW, many of those passed in cases related to neighbourhood disputes were for execution. Of 52 accused persons for whom we know the sentence, and who were involved in neighbourhood disputes, 38 were executed and 9 released, see Table 71, Appendix. This indicates the seriousness of the first step in the local community, no matter if everyday conflicts springing out of jealousy or anger were the modest beginnings of the conflict. No doubt neighbourhood disputes were treated seriously when brought to court, and this emphasises that the whole atmosphere in local communities must have been poisoned by fear of scolding or being named as a witch. But the figures also indicate that some were released, in fact almost one quarter.

Again, it should be borne in mind that the documentation is based on a small sample of the total number of cases. It will be fruitful to explore neighbourhood conflicts in greater detail as part of the close-reading of trial documents, where in particular the discourse interplay between the voice of the accuser and the voice of the accused might reveal something about the very beginning of neighbourhood conflicts, as well as the huge consequences a few angry words in everyday life might have when the case was brought to court. However, I think it is important to underline that these conflicts, not dangerous in the beginning, could only grow to the dimensions they assumed in the courtroom after demonological notions had been added to the original accusations during interrogation.

2.9 Folk belief

Folk belief is a broad concept for the seventeenth century. Julian Goodare has mentioned a range of such beliefs.²⁸⁷ Probably the mentality horizon of a seventeenth-century man or woman was quite different from what we are able to imagine today. Several witchcraft scholars have studied folk belief, and related to the Scottish witchcraft trials the belief in fairies has been focused on, as this might be a link to a common notion of the other world at the time. Joyce Miller, Alaric Hall, Lizanne Henderson and Edward J. Cowan have contributed to this field of research, as mentioned above. The notion of another world has also

²⁸⁶ Chi-square 0.563.

²⁸⁷ Goodare, 'Scottish Witchcraft in its European Context', 30–8.

been linked to a specific feature among the Highlanders, namely the second sight, a phenomenon dealt with for example by J. G. Campbell, A. Macgregor and M. Hunter.²⁸⁸

As fairy belief has been most clearly focused on in relation to witchcraft trials, I have chosen to look at this registration in SSW. Table 72 in the Appendix shows that 150 aspects of fairy and elf belief are registered – a very detailed registration. These aspects of confessions are scattered throughout the whole period of the witch-hunt. This indication is supported by Table 36 below, which illustrates that there is no particular upheaval of confessions containing fairy belief during panic years. My interpretation is that fairy belief existed among the peasants like an undercurrent during the whole period of witch-hunt. There is no evidence that intense witchcraft persecutions during panic years increased the proportion of confessions containing aspects of fairy belief.

As for gender, we see from Table 37 that out of 138 individuals, 115 women and 23 men mentioned fairies in their confessions. This is about the same proportion as women and men in the material in total, which means that men mentioned fairies relatively as often as women. It is clear that women as well as men knew about the world of fairies, but we do not know the representativeness of these numbers with regard to the population because a substantial amount of court records are missing.

Fairy belief	Total
Non-panic years	64
Panic years	74
Total	138

Table 36 Fairy belief and panic years, Scotland

Count of CaseRef	
Gender	New person mentioning fairies
Female	115
Male	23
Total	138

Table 37 Fairy belief and gender, Scotland

The question of whether a belief in fairies in Scotland could be part of the explanation why so many accused people confessed to the demonic pact and witches' meetings is difficult to answer. What is clear is that the material from Scotland documents a belief in fairies among the peasants. How these ideas mingled with demonological ideas, and may even have helped

²⁸⁸ Campbell, J. G., *Witchcraft and the Second Sight in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland* (Glasgow, 1902); Macgregor, A., *Highland Superstitions* (Stirling, 1922); Hunter, 'The Discovery', 48–53.

demonological ideas to get a foothold in Scotland, via the idea of another world, is in my opinion impossible to answer adequately today.

Healing is registered in SSW as 5 categories, as seen in Table 38 below. ‘RecHealer’ is defined as ‘Accused was a Recognised healer’, ‘HealingHumans’ is defined as ‘Accused Healed humans’, ‘HealingAnimals’ is defined as ‘Accused Healed animals’.

Count of Accused (total 3210)	
Total HealingAnimals	62
Total Folk_healing_s	168
Total RecHealer	55
Total HealingHumans	141
Total Folk_healing_p	48
Total Any_type_of-Healing	195

Table 38 Accused persons and healing, Scotland

In Table 38 the last figure, 195, is not a sum of the 5 types of healing above, but constructed according to the logical principles either-or. ‘Folk_healing’ occurs in combination with other types of healing. This combination is illustrated below in a standard cross-tabulation of Folk_Healing_s (secondary characterisation) and HealingHumans.

Count of WDB_Accused_AccusedRef	HealingHumans		
Folk_healing_s	Not mentioned	Mentioned	Total
Not mentioned	3022	20	3042
Mentioned	47	121	168
Total	3069	141	3210

Table 39 Cross-tabulation Folk healing and healing humans, Scotland

Table 39 shows 141 HealingHumans and 168 Folk_healing_s , as is also found in Table 38. Of these 121 are simultaneous observations.

Panic years	HealingHumans	HealingAnimals	Total cases
Non-panic years	54	24	1010
Panic years	87	38	2200
Total	141	62	3210

Table 40 Healing and panic years, Scotland

The proportion between healing and panic years is shown in Table 40 above. There are few registrations relative to the number of cases. HealingHumans is mentioned in 4.4% of the total cases, HealingAnimals less. Based on these few registrations, both HealingHuman and HealingAnimals is slightly more frequent in panic- than in non-panic years. There is no evidence that healing was a special panic year phenomenon. This might indicate that healing

in the same way as fairy belief discussed above was an activity performed regularly during the period of the witch-hunt, and it was not affected by the same mechanisms that initiated panics.

Gender	HealingAnimals	HealingHumans	Total cases
Female	45	118	2714
Male	17	23	456
Unknown gender			40
Total	62	141	3210

Table 41 Healing and gender, Scotland

Table 41 above shows HealingHumans and HealingAnimals related to gender of accused person. The relative proportion of HealingHumans for men and women is equal to the proportion of men and women in total. Men are over-represented in HealingAnimals. As above, I make the reservation that this conclusion is based on very few observations.

The registrations of healing in SSW give evidence that persons accused of witchcraft were mentioned as recognised healers – either performing healing of humans or animals. To which extent this type of reputation was a prominent feature is difficult to say due to the large numbers of cases where no registration of healing related information is present. The qualitative analyses, chapter 4, 5 and 6, will give more substantial information with regard to healing, and the topic will be discussed in chapter 8 as well.

2.10 Conclusion

The quantitative analyses of Scottish witchcraft trials have shown clear results for a number of areas. The Scottish witchcraft trials lasted for a period of 150 years, but with great variations of intensity from year to year. Sources document that about 3200 individuals were tried. About 84% of these were women. Gender composition in witchcraft trials varies throughout Europe. In Scotland the percentage of women seems to be slightly higher than the European average.

The occurrence of panics instigating witchcraft trials is well documented in the Scottish sources. In panic years there are about 150 annual cases, while in non-panic years the annual number of cases is 7. Not only the intensity of trials distinguishes panic years from non-panic years, also a gender bias is found. Women are more prone to be accused in panic years than in non-panic years, and they also get more severe sentences in panic years than in non-panic years. These findings are highly significant.

Local trials are the most frequent trial type by far, with 80% of the total documented types of trial. Women are over-represented in local trials, whereas men are over-represented in central trials. This may explain the different sentences given to men and women.

Verdict and sentence is known in only about 10% of all Scottish cases. Based on these well documented cases I have calculated estimate for the execution rate for all cases where name is known, about 3200 cases. I have estimated total executions by three methods. The first method indicates that about 67% of the accused were executed – a number very close to earlier estimates made for Scottish witchcraft trials. By two other and more elaborate methods I have estimated higher execution rates. By combining information about trial type and change in composition of trial type over time, I have estimated that probably as many as 80% of the accused were executed. Using statistical methods I have also tried to calculate a confidence interval around my estimates, and I have found that an interval of plus minus 50 will capture the true value with about 90% probability. I consider the estimate of executions to be a novel finding reached by using more detailed data and more advanced estimation methods than have previously been applied to the problem.

Demonological notions are in my view central to witchcraft trials. A wide range of demonological aspects are documented in Scottish witchcraft trials: renouncing of Christian baptism, entering a pact with the Devil, the Devil's mark, being the Devil's servant, acceptance of the Devil's offer of 'Want nothing' and sex with the Devil. These aspects are frequently mentioned in the confessions. In addition, witches' meetings are often confessed to, contributing to panics arising by the mentioning of accomplices participating at the same witches' meeting.

The use of torture is not to an overwhelming degree documented in Scottish witchcraft sources. SSW has registered only 110 cases of torture. This stands in contrast to the consensus among scholars that severe torture was extensively used during Scottish witchcraft trials. The answer probably is that torture was used illegally during the witch-hunt in Scotland. There were legal restrictions on the use of torture in Scottish trials. A warrant from the privy council had to be issued before torture was permitted. However, very few such warrants were issued during the period of Scottish witchcraft trials. This indicates that torture was used without the required permission, resulting in no mentioning of torture in the court records. From the scarce documentation of torture found in SSW, we can nevertheless conclude that females were clearly more frequently tortured than men. The analyses have also shown that torture primarily was applied to obtain a confession needed for an application sent to the privy council to have a commission appointed to try suspected persons for witchcraft in local courts.

3 Statistics: Finnmark

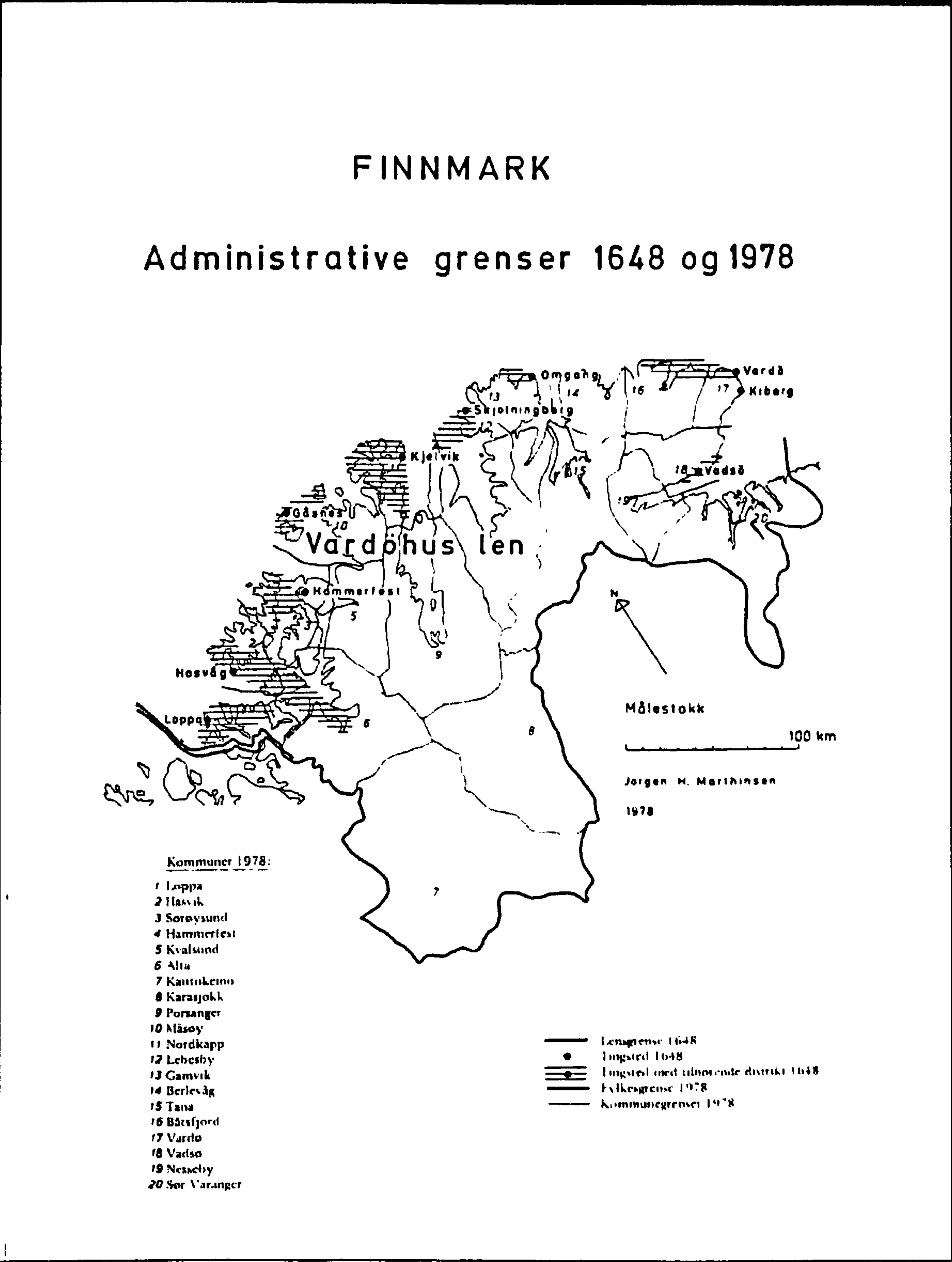


Figure 7 Map of Finnmark

3.1 Data

Finnmark is both the northernmost and easternmost county in Norway. Its area is 48,649 square kilometres, in size comparable to Denmark. It is thinly populated, with a present population of 72,399 inhabitants. Finnmark is the county in Norway with the lowest population. The eastern part of Finnmark is also the only part of Norway that has an arctic climate. Relevant to this thesis, the majority of the present ethnic Sami population of Norway also inhabits Finnmark. The present Sami population speaks Norwegian, for some as their second language. The Sami language is totally different to Norwegian, and is now recognized as an official language in Norway. At the time of the witch trials, the Sami population was not integrated with the ethnic Norwegian population, which at that time was mainly settled along the coast. The majority of the Sami lived a nomadic life in the interior of Finnmark and migrated seasonally to other parts of northern Scandinavia. From the data used in this study, at the time of the trials some Sami people also lived along the fjords and could speak Norwegian.

Documented witchcraft trials in Finnmark start around 1600. Witchcraft is dealt with in several places in the Danish-Norwegian legislation from the 1590s, as mentioned in the introductory chapter. Letters sent to district governors in Norway in 1593 and 1594 indicate that the judiciary's approach to witchcraft became more intransigent just before the turn of the century.

The statistics for Finnmark presented in this chapter are the result of a new study based on all primary sources for the Finnmark witchcraft trials. The sources have been transcribed verbatim by me and coded in SPSS®.²⁸⁹ For each record 94 variables are registered and coded. Information from the sources has been categorised systematically for statistical use. The variables are listed in Table 73 in the Appendix.

The only previous statistical treatment of the material from Finnmark is Willumsen's study *Trollkvinne i nord*, where 45 variables were coded.²⁹⁰ The basic findings from that study are still valid, especially general findings on frequency, gender, ethnicity, demonological impact, type of trial, sentence and verdict. The new statistical study of this thesis is more comprehensive. As more variables are registered, more questions can be

²⁸⁹ Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.

²⁹⁰ That study followed the list of accused persons in Næss, *Trolldomsprosessene i Norge*, which is the only study so far of all witchcraft trials in Norway. Næss' study also included cases where a person was brought to court accused of slandering another person for being a witch. So did Willumsen in *Trollkvinne i nord*. In this thesis, however, cases of slandering have been excluded.

answered. The present study thus contributes new and more detailed findings from Finnmark than have been published previously.

3.2 Gender

The absolute and relative number of women and men accused of witchcraft in Finnmark is shown in Table 42, and more details are found in Table 75 in the Appendix.

Gender	Total	Percent
Women	111	82.3%
Men	24	17.7%
Total	135	100%

Table 42 Gender, all persons accused of witchcraft, Finnmark

The percentage of women accused of witchcraft in Finnmark is 82.3%. This is very close to the Scottish percentage, which is 83.9%. Compared to rest of Europe the percentage of women in Finnmark witch trials is within the typical European range of between 75% and 85%, as has been discussed in chapter 2.²⁹¹ The women accused of witchcraft in Finnmark, apparently represented an average of ordinary women.²⁹² The ages of most of the Norwegian women are not known. We know that at least 62% were or had been married, while having children was mentioned by only 5% of the women accused. Almost one fifth of the total accused had moved in from areas further south, among them several servants accused in the panic of 1654–5. As Finnmark in the seventeenth century was gradually being populated by people from the rest of Norway, many women came to Finnmark as servants and settled there. The court records bear witness to charms which some of the accused had learned from housewives further south in Norway, where they had been employed formerly.²⁹³ The gender question will be revisited in more detail below.

3.3 Frequency of cases over time

135 persons were accused of witchcraft in the period 1600–92, see Table 74 in the Appendix.²⁹⁴ Figure 8 below shows the frequency for witchcraft trials in Finnmark. There are three distinctive peaks in the period, denoting panics, 1620–1, 1652–4 and 1662–3.

²⁹¹ Exceptions include Normandy, Russia and Iceland, with respectively 27, 32 and 8% women, Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 142.
²⁹² Willumsen, *Trollkvinne*, (1994), 71.
²⁹³ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne*, (1994), 34.
²⁹⁴ R. Hagen has 138 persons accused for witchcraft in Finnmark for the period 1590-1692, *Dei europeiske hekseprosessane*, 92. The reason why Hagen and I have different totals is that we are using slightly different criteria. Hagen has included in his list two Sami men from Utsjokk in Sweden, who were tried in the 1590s. I have chosen to use the geographical borders of Finnmark; Utsjokk was and still is outside Norway, and the two

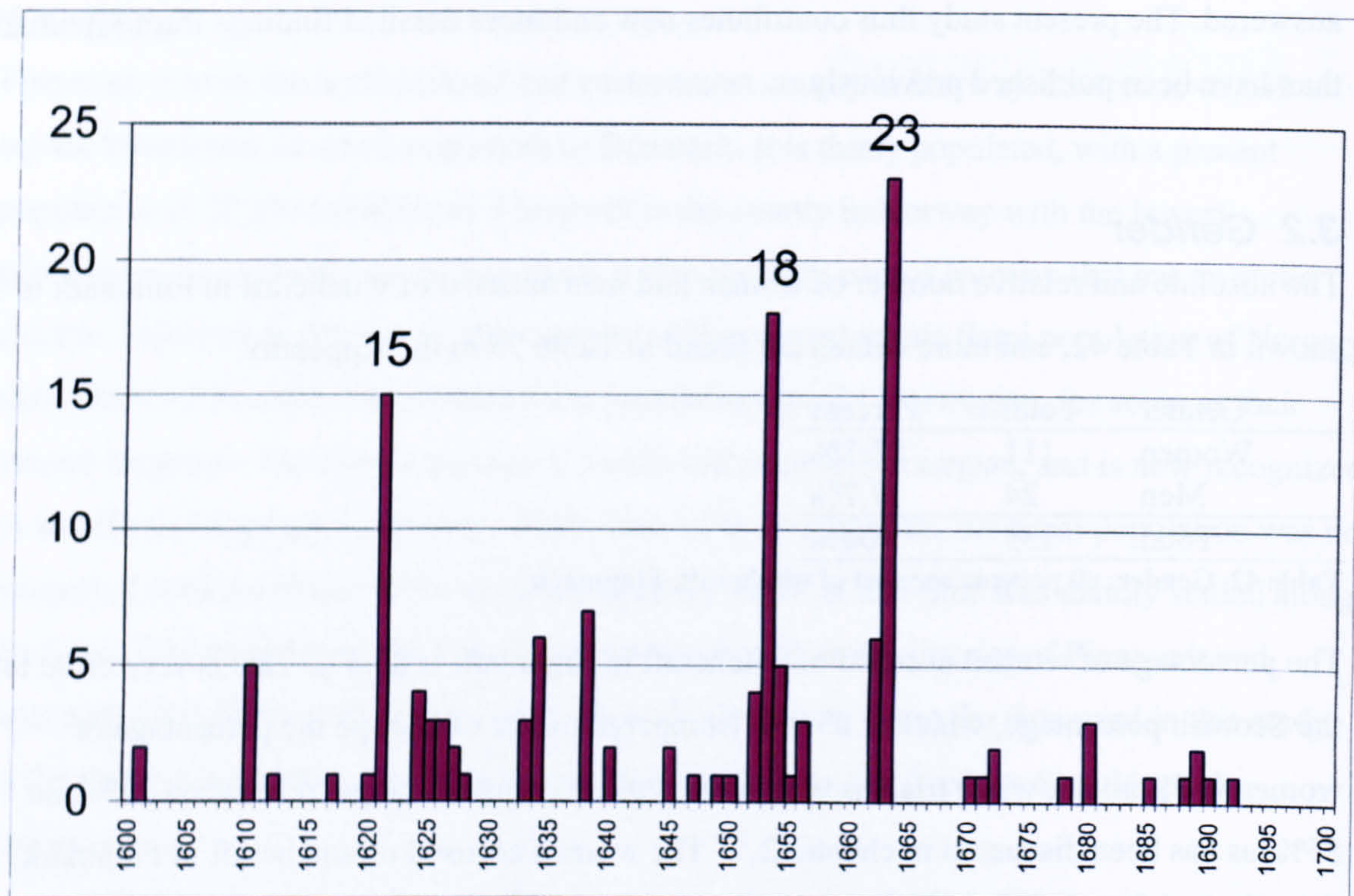


Figure 8 Witchcraft cases by year 1600–92, Finnmark

The Finnmark population in the seventeenth century was not more than about 3,000 people, an estimate attributed to Hans Eivind Næss.²⁹⁵ Scotland had at the same time an estimated population of 1 million. The total accused of witchcraft was 4.5% of Finnmark's average population, which is the highest frequency in any Norwegian county and extremely high compared to other European countries. With only 0.8% of Norway's population, the Finnmark county has 16% of all Norwegian documented witchcraft trials and 31% of all death sentences in witchcraft trials.²⁹⁶ Thus the witch-hunt must have had an enormous impact on the population in Finnmark, as mentioned by Ole Lindhartsen.²⁹⁷ It should be noted, however, that Finnmark is in a special situation in Norway, because Finnmark together with Rogaland (unlike the rest of the 20 Norwegian counties) has court records from local courts which are

are thus excluded. In addition the trial of Anders Aal, 1654, is included among Hagen's accused persons, but is not on my list. Anders Aal was imprisoned and charged with adultery and violence. Sorcery was mentioned as an accusation along with several others by one of the witnesses, but this point was not paid any attention to during the trial. The verdict and the sentence did not mention witchcraft. Anders Aal was not tried for witchcraft, and is also excluded.

²⁹⁵ Næss, *Trolldomsprosessene i Norge*, 32.

²⁹⁶ Næss, *Trolldomsprosessene i Norge*, 32.

²⁹⁷ Lindhartsen, O., 'Lensherrer, heksejakt og justismord i Finnmark på 1600-tallet', in G. J. Valen, K. Skavhaug, K. Schanche (eds.), *Flytting og forandring i Finnmarks fortid* (Alta, 2002), 62–4.

fully or almost fully preserved.²⁹⁸ But even when comparing the Finnmark witchcraft trials with those from Rogaland, a county in south-west Norway, the high percentage of death sentences in Finnmark becomes conspicuous. In Finnmark 68% of the accused were executed. In Rogaland 22% of the accused were executed.²⁹⁹

A trend towards stronger persecution of witchcraft from around 1620 apparently started with the witchcraft decree of 1617. King Christian IV issued a decree about 'Witches and their Accomplices' that was used in both Denmark and Norway. *Real* witches are persons 'who have attached themselves to the Devil or who consort with him'. In the Finnmark courts this decree is referred to on several occasions, the first in 1620. In this decree, the concept of witchcraft is - for the first time in Danish-Norwegian legislation - related to a connection with the Devil. Use of charms is to be punished with banishment and 'forfeiture of real property'.

The increased persecution during the 1620s might also be related to John Cunningham taking up the office of District Governor of Vardøhus in 1619. After Cunningham's death in 1651 Jørgen Friis took over as District Governor. Based on his frequent presence at local courts and his active participation in interrogation, Friis appears to have been a keen witch-hunter, in cooperation with the bailiff of East Finnmark, Hans Jensen Ørbech and the depute bailiff Knud Jensen.³⁰⁰ Lindhartsen has hypothesized that it was important for district governors to make themselves seen as severe witch-hunters when they were installed.³⁰¹

A new change at the administrative level in 1660, when the District Governor was replaced by the Regional Governor, might possibly have contributed to triggering the panic of 1662–1663. As is seen from Figure 8, the number of witchcraft cases after 1663 decreased rapidly and there were no more panics.

I will now focus on panics. A panic consists of a large number of linked trials during a concentrated period of time, most often one or two years. I define a panic in the Finnmark material as more than seven linked trials. The panic periods in the material from Finnmark took place in 1620–1, 1652–3 and 1662–3, corresponding with the peaks in frequency of trials shown in Figure 8 above.

To explain the concentration of trials during panic periods is in my view a key to explaining the European witch-hunt. In the following I will examine gender in relation to panics. Of 111 accused females, 65 were accused in panic periods and 46 in non-panic periods.

²⁹⁸ Næss, *Trolldomsprosessene i Norge*, 26.

²⁹⁹ Næss, *Trolldomsprosessene i Norge*, 29, 247.

³⁰⁰ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne* (1994), 33.

³⁰¹ Lindhartsen, 'Lensherrer', 60–1.

Of 24 accused males, 2 were accused in panic periods and 22 in non-panic periods, see Table 43 below and Table 79 in the Appendix.

	Gender		
	Women	Men	Total
Panics			
Non-panics	46	22	68
Panics	65	2	67
Grand Total	111	24	135

Table 43 Gender and panics, Finnmark

The different treatment of the genders is statistically highly significant, as shown in Table 80 in the Appendix.³⁰² The proportion of women accused of witchcraft was much higher in panic periods than in non-panic periods. Almost all men were accused in non-panic periods. Gender is demonstrated to be an important variable during panic years. Women cause panics to arise due to the multiplying factor implicit in the demonological type of denunciation. There is an automatic accumulation of new suspects as a consequence of linked trials.

The number of trials by gender and year in Finnmark is illustrated in Figure 9 below. Details are found in Table 75 in the Appendix. The intensity in accusation of females throughout the witch-hunt is clearly seen to follow the panic years.

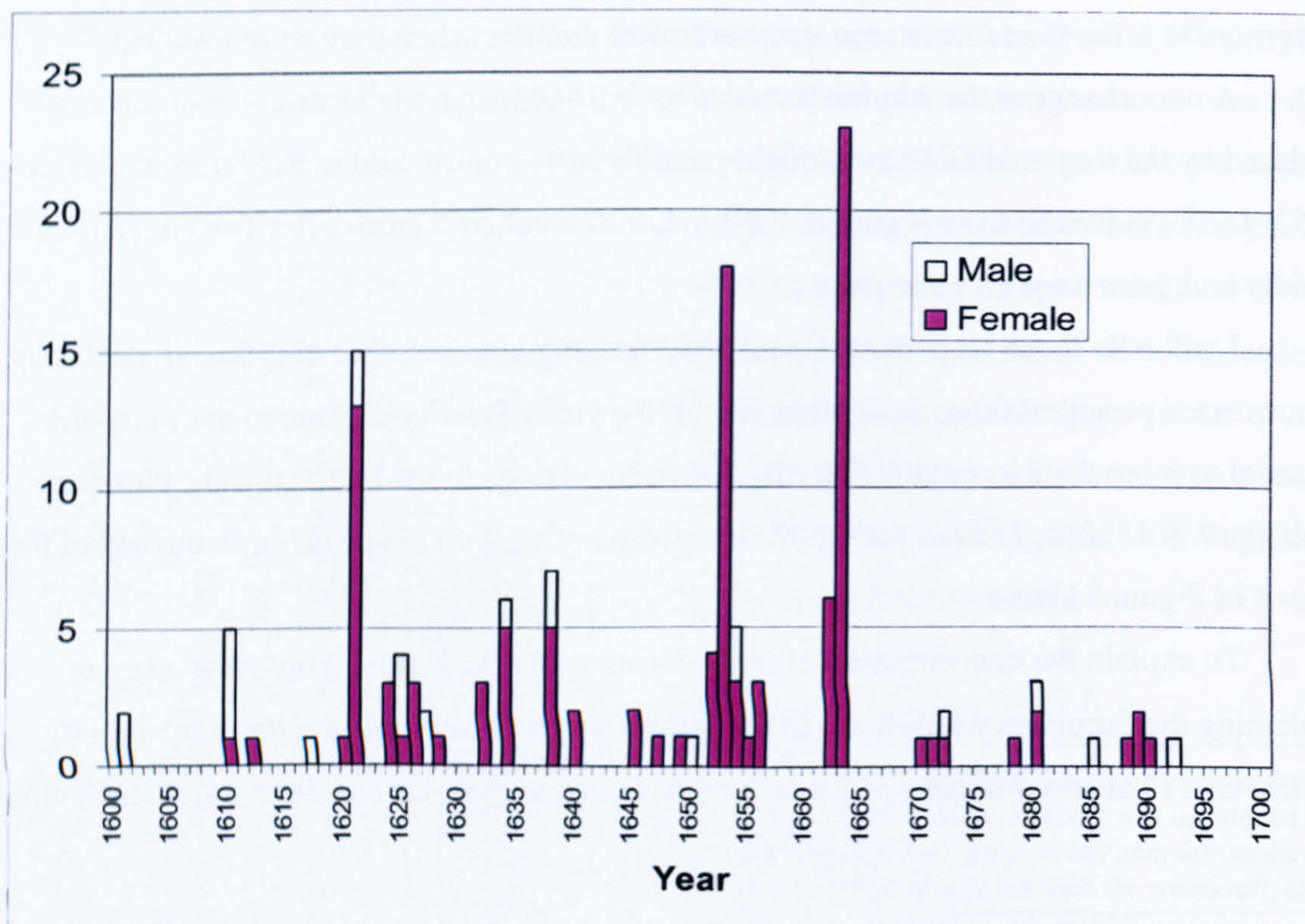


Figure 9 Number of trials by gender and year, Finnmark

³⁰² Chi-square 19.913.

The pattern of trials of men over the years is different from those of women. Most of the men were tried during the first half of the century, the majority before 1630. Men accused of witchcraft were either single cases or minor linked trials. Men were also tried after 1670, during the last period of the Finnmark witch-hunt. The majority of women were tried between 1620 and 1663, mostly during panic years. In the largest panic of 1662–3 men were totally absent. This indicates a gender difference relating to panics, due to demonic pact confessions and the use of torture. The difference in frequency between women and men throughout the witchcraft trials corresponds with a heated atmosphere during the five decades after 1620, when women were particularly exposed to witchcraft accusations. The different treatment of women and men has been pointed out by Willumsen.³⁰³ Clearly women were most frequently accused in panics, while men were accused in single trials between the panics. The correlation between gender and linked trials has been tested. The probability for a woman to be accused in linked trials was much higher than that of a man, see Table 76 and Table 77 in the Appendix.³⁰⁴ There is also a clear correlation between all trials with links to other trials and panics, see Table 78 in the Appendix.

3.4 Types of trial

Two types of trial were held in Finnmark in the period of the witch-hunt, local trials and Court of Appeal, as has been explained in the Introduction. The legal officials involved in the local trials were the district governor, the bailiff, the deputy bailiff, and the magistrate. The courts had a jury of appointed men from the local community, corresponding to the Scottish assize. A variant of the local trial was the *ledingsting*.³⁰⁵ Some witchcraft trials in the 1620s were brought before this type of court: 5 cases in 1621, 2 in 1624 and 1 in 1626. The reason why witchcraft cases were brought before these courts was that the bailiff and magistrate filled several roles as officials in Finnmark. I classify the *ledingsting* as a local court.

In addition to the local courts there was the Court of Appeal, which was a circuit court with sessions every third year in summer. The person in charge of the Court of Appeal was the Court Appeal Judge. The Court of Appeal could act as a court of first as well as a court of second instance. The witchcraft cases by type of court and year are shown in Figure 10 below.

³⁰³ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne* (1994), 71–3.

³⁰⁴ Chi-square 10.365.

³⁰⁵ *Ledingsting* was originally a local taxation court or administrative court.

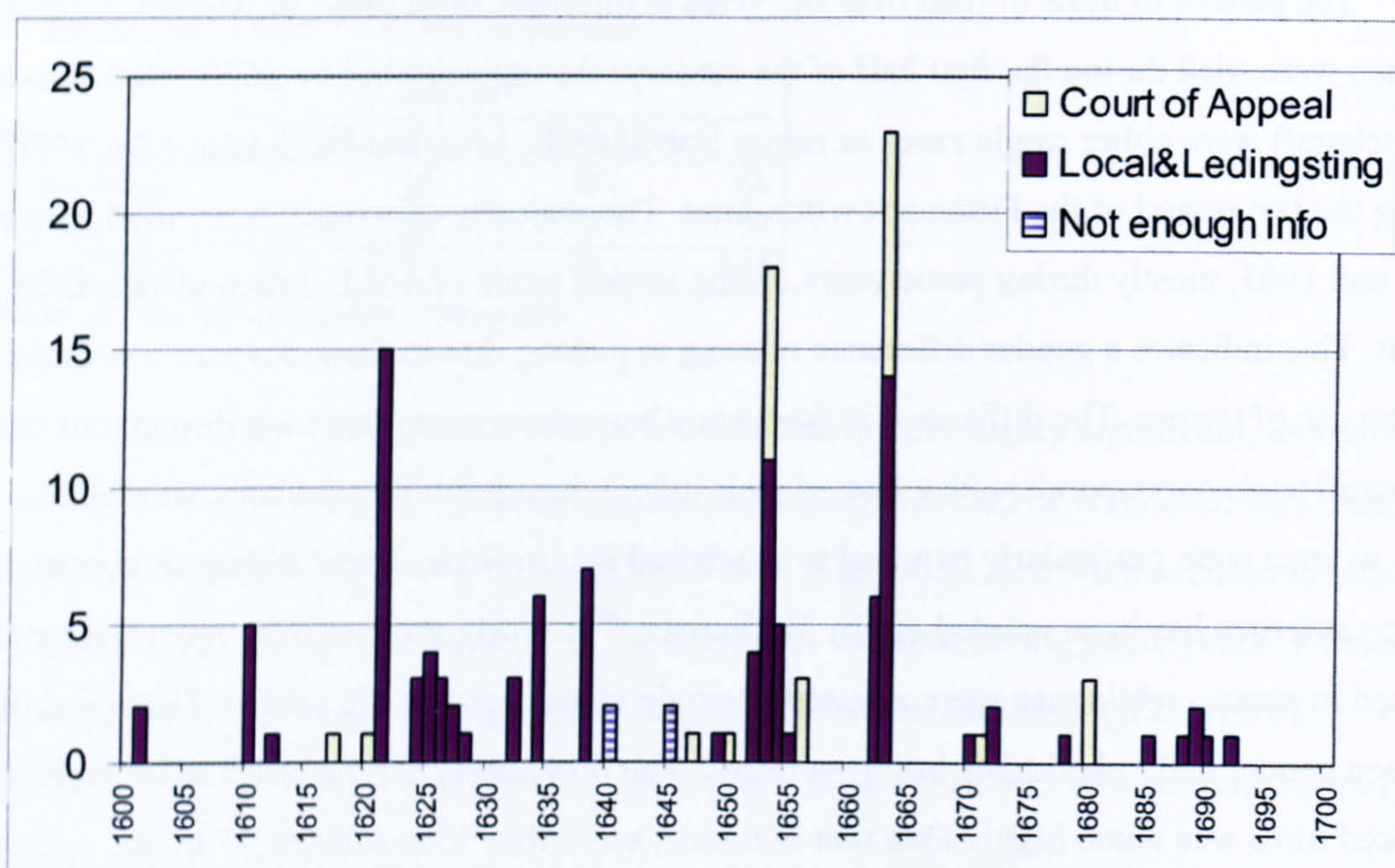


Figure 10 Witchcraft trials in Finnmark, by type of court and year

The majority of witchcraft cases were tried before the local courts. Witchcraft cases were sent to the Court of Appeal particularly from the late 1640s and the remainder of the witch-hunt period. Only one very special case was deferred and sent to the King in Copenhagen.

The distance to Copenhagen is an important background when trying to understand and interpret the intensity and frequency of trials before the local courts. The district governors, later the regional governors, were completely left to act on their own as far as activity in local courts was concerned. Disregard of accepted legal practice was common. For instance torture before verdict and sentence was used, although the practice was forbidden by law. It took weeks to send a message to Copenhagen by boat and more weeks before an answer could be expected in return. It would be difficult in practical terms for central authorities in Copenhagen to quell an emerging panic. Apparently all governors in charge of Vardøhus during the period of the witch-hunt were keen witch-hunters.

Cases sent to the Court of Appeal increased particularly in the 1650s and the 1660s, and might signal the end of the era of witchcraft panics in Finnmark. The role played by the Court of Appeal Judge for Nordlandene, Mandrup Pederssøn Schønnebøl, who held his office from 1648 until 1682, is especially important.³⁰⁶ Aage Thor Falkanger maintains that

³⁰⁶ Falkanger, *Lagmann*, 148–53.

Schønnebøl, because of his acquittal of a number of persons accused of witchcraft, had to face criticism from, among others, Regional Governor Hans H. Lilienskiold, who was in office from 1684 until 1701.³⁰⁷ The reason why many cases were sent to the Court of Appeal in 1663 was that the panic of 1662–3 included six small girls. These cases were considered too difficult for the local courts to judge. The possibility of using the Court of Appeal was limited due to the fact that this circuit court only assembled every third year in summer time, and the court was in session for only a few days at the court locations along the coast. If the jury knew that the Appeal Court Judge was coming to Finnmark just a few months later, difficult cases could be referred to him.

	Local & Ledingsting	Court of Appeal	Not enough info
Female	83	24	4
Male	21	3	0

Table 44 Type of trial and gender in Finnmark

Table 44 above and Table 83 in the Appendix illustrate the proportion of men and women accused of witchcraft in local trials and the Court of Appeal. 83 women and 21 men were tried at local courts, while 24 women and 3 men were tried in the Court of Appeal. This means that 77% of the accused were tried in local courts, approximately four women for each man. In the Court of Appeal there are eight women for each man. Part of the explanation is the girls involved in the panic of 1662–3.

3.5 Verdict and sentence

Table 45 below shows sentences passed in different types of trials.

Sentence	Type_Of_Trial			
	Unknown	Local	Court of Appeal	Total
Not enough info		1		1
Burned	4	78	3	85
Aquitted		1	20	21
Fined		8	2	10
Case postponed		6		6
Case sent to Copenhagen		1		1
Banished/exiled		1		1
Beheaded			2	2
Accused killed before end of trial		4		4
Execution by unspecified method		1		1
Other		2		2
Fined and case postponed		1		1
Total	4	104	27	135

Table 45 Types of trial and sentence, Finnmark

³⁰⁷ Falkanger, *Lagmann*, 151.

The number of executed persons during the Finnmark witchcraft trials is 88, an execution percentage of 65%. Of these individuals ~~83~~⁴ were burned, 2 were beheaded, and 1 person was executed by an unspecified method.³⁰⁸ If I add 4 people who were killed before the end of their trial, the number of those who lost their lives during the witch-hunt in Finnmark is ~~92~~¹. Those killed before the trial ended were either tortured to death or murdered during custody. Using ~~92~~¹ who lost their lives due to witchcraft trials, the death percentage is 68%. Finnmark had a much higher death percentage than witchcraft trials in the rest of Norway, where this percentage varied from 2% to 25%. The last percentage is found in Rogaland, where the sources are adequate, as in Finnmark.³⁰⁹ The severity of the Finnmark trials compared to the rest of Norway is unquestionable.

Of non-capital sentences 11 people were fined, 9 of them in local courts and 2 in the Court of Appeal. All 8 cases postponed started at local courts. Usually these cases were postponed to a later session at the same court. Only one case, the last one in 1692, was sent to Copenhagen for further decision. The postponed cases were mainly during the 1620s and 1680s, representing relatively early and late stages of the witch-hunt and taking place in non-panic years. The acquittals occurred mainly during the 1662–3 panic. After this there were acquittals in single cases in 1672, 1678 and 1680. This indicates that at the end of the witch-hunt, the risk of losing one's life when accused of witchcraft decreased. The same tendency is found for Scotland.

Under the discussion of types of trial above I have shown that the ratio of accused persons who received the sentence of execution was much higher in local trials than in the Court of Appeal. The data show that it was much more serious to be brought before the local court than before the Court of Appeal. Table 45 demonstrates that there were 88 sentences of execution. In Table 84 in the Appendix, the data are further analysed. Of those executed 83 were before local courts and 5 before Court of Appeal. In 4 cases of execution type of trial is not known. This difference turns out to be highly statistically significant.³¹⁰

The proportion of individuals who were given a sentence of execution in local courts and were executed was 90%: 79 out of 88 sentences. The proportion of individuals who were given a sentence of execution in the Court of Appeal was respectively 5.7%. My analysis

³⁰⁸ Orig. 'at miste liffuit', meaning 'to lose one's life'.

³⁰⁹ Næss, *Trolldomsprosessene i Norge*, 247.

³¹⁰ Chi-square 36.516

shows that the chance of being executed was much higher when a person was brought before a local court compared with the Court of Appeal.

In contrast, one finds that acquittals were rare in local courts and frequent in the Court of Appeal. Table 45 above shows that of those who were acquitted, only 1 person in 21 was tried in a local court, while 20 were tried in the Court of Appeal. Of those who were not acquitted, 103 out of 110 were given their verdict in local courts and 7 in the Court of Appeal. This shows that the chance of being acquitted in a local trial was significantly lower than in the Court of Appeal. If a person in Finnmark managed to get his or her trial passed on to the Court of Appeal, the probability of acquittal increased enormously. This tendency also holds true for the rest of the Norwegian witchcraft trials.³¹¹

3.6 The demonological element

In my hypothesis the demonological element is seen as a crucial factor explaining the historical witch-hunt. Willumsen has uncovered the strong impact of demonology during the Finnmark witchcraft trials.³¹² This is a very important finding. Finnmark was at the time an extremely geographically remote area in Europe. Nevertheless, the strong influence of demonological elements found in witchcraft sources connects Finnmark with the Scottish and the European material. Court records from Finnmark differ from other parts of Norway with regard to demonology, which is seen in studies on court records from eastern, southern and western parts of Norway.³¹³ I will argue that this fact explains the high intensity and execution rate during the witchcraft trials in Finnmark.

Table 46 below shows the occurrence of demonic pact confessions in Finnmark in panic versus non-panic periods. There are in total 58 demonic pact confessions, of these 43 are in panic periods, inclusive of 5 demonic pact confessions which are implicit.³¹⁴

³¹¹ Næss, *Trolldomsprosessene i Norge*, 267.

³¹² Willumsen, *Trollkvinne* (1984), 99.

³¹³ Knutsen, *Trolldomsprosessene på Østlandet*; Næss, *Trolldomsprosessene i Norge*; Botnheim, *Trolldomsprosessene i Bergenhus len*.

³¹⁴ The term 'Implicit' is used to denote that demonic pact is implicitly understood from formulations in the court records.

	Demonic_pact_confession					
Panics	Not enough information	Yes	No	Implicit, i.e. the evil one has taught the craft	Confession previous trial, in present no	Total
Non-panics	12	10	41	4	1	68
Panics	3	38	21	5		67
Grand Total	15	48	62	9	1	135

Table 46 Panics and demonic pact, Finnmark

Several demonological features are mentioned in the Finnmark material, such as favour from the Devil when entering the pact, the Devil’s mark and the names of demons, in Finnmark called *apostel*. Favour from the Devil is often mentioned as part of the pact. In the Finnmark material favour is mentioned as an equivalent to the Scottish ‘never want’ in 12 cases, money in 4 cases, luck regarding food and clothes in 3 cases and luck regarding cattle in 3 cases. This range of favours points to the desire on the part of the women to have security and fulfilment of basic material needs. The Devil’s mark is mentioned in 11 of the confessions, in addition to 1 person having mentioned this in a previous trial. Names of demons found in these confessions are: Cax, Friis, Satan, Saclumb, Zakkerias, the Angel of Light, Asmudeo, Isach, Christopher, Dominicus, Mamo, Jermund, Abedom, Macome, Plister, Old Erich, Baris, Morten, Jacob, Peder, Samuel and Christen. Some of these are biblical names, some are common names and Old Erich is a common Norwegian euphemism for Satan.³¹⁵ The choice of demons’ names shows the span between ordinary names and demonically influenced names in the witchcraft narratives.

One of the features characterising demonology is the multiplying effect of denunciations resulting in panics. It is therefore of importance to study how panics and demonology are related. For the Finnmark material three such points have been studied: firstly the occurrence of demonic pact confessions in panic versus non-panic periods, secondly the correlation between demonic pact confessions and panics, and, thirdly, the correlation between demonic pact confessions, panics and women. I will apply the following methodology to investigate the possible link between demonic pact confessions and panics. Firstly I split demonic pact confessions into panic and non-panic periods, see Table 46 above. Secondly, the correlation between panics and demonology is tested, see Table 81 in the Appendix.³¹⁶ Thirdly, the correlation between panics, female and demonology is tested, as seen in Table 82 in the Appendix.³¹⁷ When tested the analysis reveals that the correlation

³¹⁵ Rudwin, M., *The devil in legend and literature* (La Salle, 1973).

³¹⁶ Chi-square 24.433.

³¹⁷ Chi-square 11.046.

between panics and demonology is statistically significant. Likewise the correlation between panics, female and demonology is statistically significant. This demonstrates that in a panic period a demonological case was far more likely to occur than in a non-panic period and that a woman was much more likely than a man to deliver a demonological confession in a panic period than in a non-panic period. Thus my analysis supports a correlation between these factors, already demonstrated above in Chapter 2 as being present in the Scottish cases. It is also interesting to note that most of demonic pact confessions in Finnmark were given at Vardøhus, where the majority of panics took place.³¹⁸

As seen above, the rise of panics was dependent upon a multiplying factor. The reasons why the panics increase so rapidly is to be found in confessions of witches' meetings and confessions of collective sorcery operations. The confessions in Finnmark contain the following places for witches' meetings: Lyderhorn, Balduolden, Vardbjerg, Dovre Mountain, Heckel Mountain, Domen and Lærvigen. These locations include well-known witches' mountains near and distant: Heckel Mountain in Germany, Lyderhorn outside Bergen, Dovre Mountain in the south of Norway, Domen outside Vardø. The names of meeting places echo famous witches' mountains also mentioned in court records from other parts of Norway. Metamorphosis was included in the Finnmark confessions: shape-shifting to birds, whales and cats in order to obtain shapes appropriate to the sorcery activity.

Activities at witches' meetings in Finnmark confessions are singing, drinking, eating and Devil worship, often several of these at the same time. The Devil was the main person at the meeting; he provided the participants with food and drink and played for them.³¹⁹ Sex with the Devil was not an important issue in Finnmark and might only be interpreted implicitly in one case when a woman confessed that she had to promise to serve Satan with her body.³²⁰

In 66 Finnmark cases an accused person named other suspects as part of the confession. In addition 1 person had denounced another person in a previous case. When about half of the accused named other suspects, this fits into the pattern of Finnmark witchcraft trials as strongly marked by demonological features and characterised by panics. As will be seen in the qualitative analyses, there was a substantial network of denunciations

³¹⁸ See Table 86 in the Appendix.

³¹⁹ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne* (1994), 28, 35–6, 40–2.

³²⁰ Lisbet Nilsdatter, SF 6, fo. 34v.

during the panics, where each of the accused women mentioned several others who had participated at witches’ meetings or in sorcery operations.³²¹

It should also be noted that 90 of the accused persons in Finnmark were brought to court because they were denounced by others. This emphasises the denunciation trial character mentioned in my hypothesis in the Introduction, a case which was started from a denunciation, without accusations and without complaints.³²² Ordinary legal requirements with regard to accusations and the burden of proof were set aside when the crime of witchcraft was dealt with.

A higher proportion of women than men confessed to the demonic pact in Finnmark, see Table 47 below. Direct mention of the demonic pact involves only women, 48 in number. In addition 8 females confessed indirectly to the demonic pact. Only one man confessed to the demonic pact, which suggests that the demonic pact in Finnmark was to an overwhelming degree a covenant between a female and the Devil.

Demonic_pact_confession	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Not enough info	11	4	15
Yes	48	0	48
No	43	19	62
Implicit, i.e. the evil one had taught the craft	8	1	9
In previous trial yes, in present no	1	0	1
Total	111	24	135

Table 47 Demonic pact and gender, Finnmark

3.7 Torture

Use of torture is documented in the Finnmark witchcraft trials. The total occurrence of torture is difficult to unveil, as this piece of information is often ‘hidden’ in the sources. The fact that torture before sentence was not permitted in Denmark-Norway, as discussed in the Introduction, undoubtedly influenced documentation in the court records. In my coding of the material I have tried to catch both the direct mentioning of torture and the implicit mention of it. Implicit mention of torture may be exemplified by expressions as ‘confessed willingly’, ‘confessed without torture’ or ‘confessed of own free will’, a topic which will be studied in more detail in the qualitative analyses.

Torture led to the naming of accomplices and thus a sudden increase in the number of suspects. The correlation between torture and panics has been tested statistically, and is

³²¹ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne*, (1994), 36, 41–2.

³²² Robberstad, *Rettsoga I*, 78.

statistically significant,³²³ see Table 89 in the Appendix. Likewise I have tested for the presence of a positive correlation between torture and demonic pact confession. There is a strong positive correlation,³²⁴ as shown in Table 87 in the Appendix. This means that torture was frequently used before a demonic pact confession was delivered.

Several of the persons accused of witchcraft in Finnmark at first denied knowledge of witchcraft. During later interrogations they confessed. This information can only be obtained by detailed study of court records. The correlation between torture and denial of witchcraft during the initial interrogation has been tested. There is a positive correlation between torture and initial denial of witchcraft,³²⁵ see Table 88 in the Appendix. This means that those individuals who first refused to confess were more likely to be tortured than those who confessed at once. The findings above support a hypothesis that torture caused panics and underlines the harsh conditions during panic years.

The study of torture is extended by also focusing on gender. The correlation between panics, female and torture has been tested. The result is statistically significant,³²⁶ see Table 90 in the Appendix. The result suggests that for women as a group, the proportion of those who were tortured was higher in panic periods compared to non-panic periods.

In total the data related to torture, panics and gender supports a hypothesis that during panic periods several risks for women were intensified. In the first place, the risk of being accused was increased. The risk of being tortured was increased. Finally, there was a clear connection between those who were tortured and those who were burned.

Table 48 below illustrates the use of torture at different court levels.

	Local and Ledingsting	Court of Appeal
Torture: Yes	7	3
Torture: Implicit	30	1

Table 48 Torture and types of trial, Finnmark

Of all cases of documented and implied torture, 37 out of 41 were in local courts. The correlation between torture and types of trial has been tested. The result is weakly statistically significant, see Table 91 in the Appendix.³²⁷ Even if the documentation of torture is scarce in

³²³ Chi-square 7.079.
³²⁴ Chi-square 18.947.
³²⁵ Chi-square 15.972.
³²⁶ Chi-square 6.733.
³²⁷ Chi-square 4.255, significant at the 5% confidence level.

the material, it is clear that both direct and indirect documentation of torture is linked mainly to local courts. The likelihood of being tortured was much higher for a person accused in a local court than for a person who got her or his case tried before the Court of Appeal. If an accused person managed to have the case sent to the Court of Appeal, the likelihood of torture was minimised.

Torture methods in Finnmark during the witchcraft trials were similar to those in several other European regions. Torture methods are documented in the court records from the local courts and the Court of Appeal. Among torture methods mentioned in Finnmark are the rack, red-hot tongs and ‘sulphur on her breasts when she lay on the torture rack’. Moreover the women were periodically strapped down during their incarceration. It is recorded that Ingeborg, Peder Krogh’s wife, ‘wore the iron collar and arm chains’.³²⁸ Margerete Jonsdatter ‘wore the prison on her body’.³²⁹ Torture in Finnmark in several cases resulted in death before sentence was passed, something which caused a reaction from people in Vardø, resulting in a letter to the Regional Governor.³³⁰ Torture methods will be dealt with in greater detail during the qualitative analyses.

3.8 Ethnicity

King Christian IV paid special attention to Sami sorcery and focused on Finnmark as a place where sorcery was likely to take place. In a letter from 1609 to District Governor Claus Gage at Vardøhus, he mentioned sorcery in connection with Finns and Lapps who by nature were particularly apt to use magic. Witches should be judged and sentenced to be executed without mercy. Whoever was suspected of witchcraft should be banished from the district.³³¹ Here the term witchcraft is related to Sami practices of magic.

Ethnicity is one of the factors mentioned in my hypothesis as possibly influential on the witchcraft trials. In Finnmark two different ethnic groups lived side by side, each with a language and a culture of their own: the Norwegians and the Samis. Persons from both ethnic groups were accused during the witchcraft trials: 111 ethnic Norwegians and 24 ethnic Samis, see Figure 11 below and Table 92 in the Appendix. Out of a population of 3,000, there were ca 600 Samis living in Finnmark in the seventeenth century.³³²

³²⁸ SAT, Records of Court of Appeal 1647–1668, fo. 167.

³²⁹ SAT, Records of Court of Appeal 1647–1668, fo. 161.

³³⁰ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne* (1994), 39.

³³¹ Niemi, *Vadsø historie*, 219; Willumsen, *Trollkvinne*, 73.

³³² <http://www.ssb.no/emner/00/00/10/samer/> and http://www.ssb.no/histstat/art_107.pdf

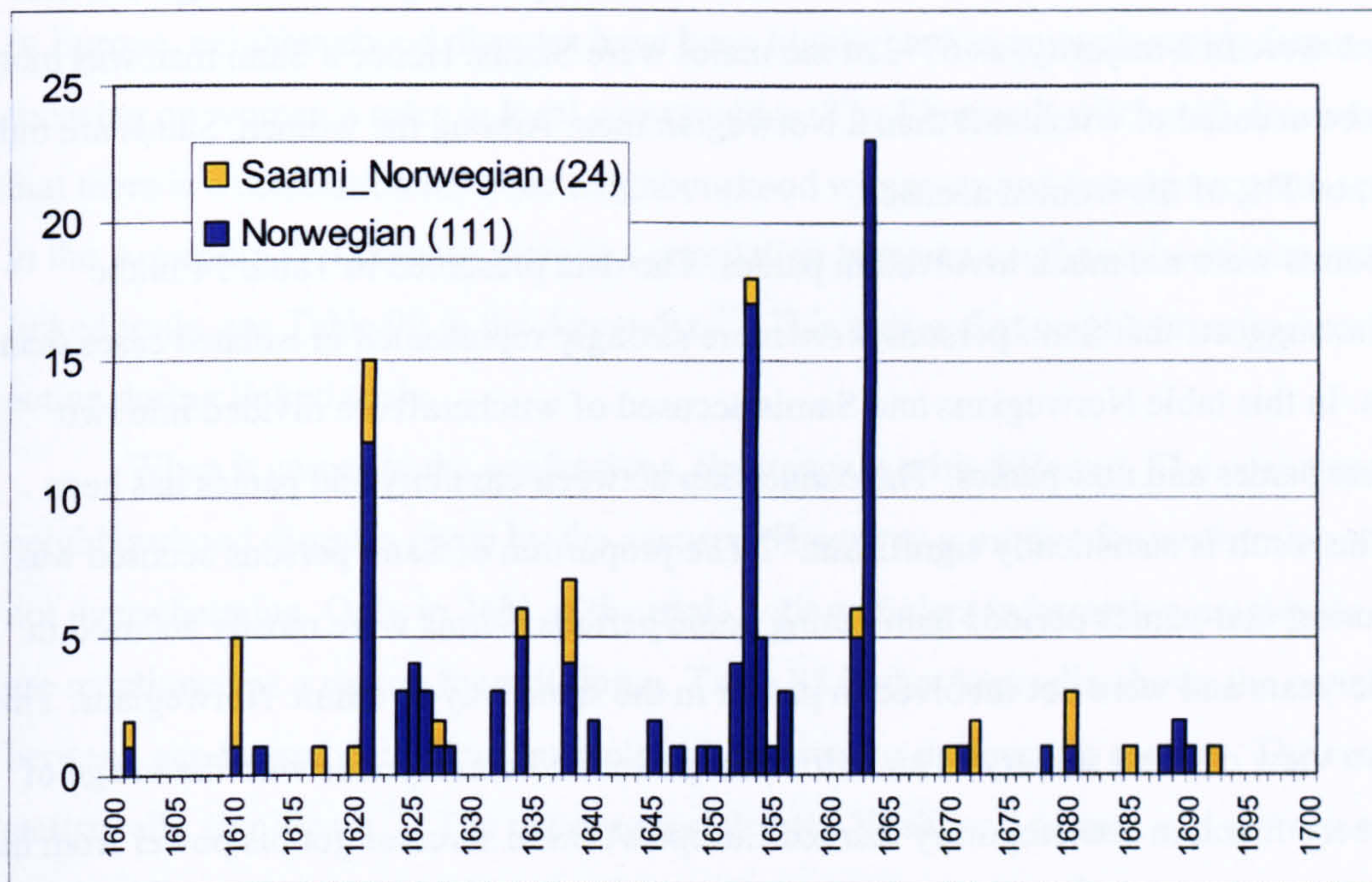


Figure 11 Frequency of ethnicity by year, Finnmark

The distribution of Sami persons accused of witchcraft in Finnmark is most distinct before 1640 and after 1670. The number of Samis during the panics in 1650s and 1660s is very low. The number of Samis follows the same pattern as for men in the material, something which is logical given the high percentage of men among the Samis accused.

The Norwegian population was more exposed to witchcraft accusations than the Sami population. Of the 135 accused persons, 17.8% were Samis. This might be a bit unexpected, as the Samis had a reputation for sorcery all over Europe at the time. However, the explanation might be that traditional Sami sorcery was alleged to be an individual skill, displaying inherent magical power. The performers of Sami magic in contemporary books were males. Authors like Olaus Magnus, Peder Claussøn Friis and Johan Schefferus, whose books were published in 1555, 1632 and 1673 respectively, all portray Sami men – not Sami women – as exotic and pagan for a contemporary reading European audience.³³³ The authors emphasise the superstition of the Samis and their ability to perform sorcery using a special type of Sami magic called ‘gand’,³³⁴ and selling wind to sailors by binding three knots on a rope or a piece of cloth.³³⁵ The distribution of females and males, Table 93 in the Appendix,

³³³ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne* (1994), 51–52; Magnus, *Historia om de nordiska folken*; Friis, P. C., *Norriges Beskriffuelse* (Copenhagen, 1632); Schefferus, J., *Lapponia* (Frankfurt am Main, 1673).

³³⁴ In Norwegian *gand* is the noun and *gande* is the verb denoting a curse falling upon a person due to Sami magic; Pollan, *Samiske beretninger*, 34.

³³⁵ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne* (1984), 64–6.

shows that 8 Sami women and 16 Sami men were accused. Among the accused males, the Sami men were in a majority, as 67% of the males were Samis. Hence a Sami man was more likely to be accused of witchcraft than a Norwegian man. Among the women, Samis are only 8 of 111, or 7%, of the women accused.

Samis were not much involved in panics. The data presented in Table 94 in the Appendix, suggests that Sami persons were more strongly represented in isolated cases than in panics. In this table Norwegians and Samis accused of witchcraft are divided into two categories: panics and non-panics. The connection between ethnicity and panics has been tested. The result is statistically significant.³³⁶ The proportion of Sami persons accused was higher during non-panics periods than during panic periods. Samis were mostly accused in non-panic years and were not involved in panics in the same way as ethnic Norwegians. This points to a view of Sami sorcery as an individual power and corresponds with the image of Sami sorcery found in contemporary learned Europe. A Sami sorcerer got his power from his inherent talents and was not seen as a member of a group.

No doubt the Samis had a general reputation as cunning in sorcery. One should assume that this connection also becomes visible in the data material. The connection between ethnicity and reputation for sorcery has been tested. The result is not statistically significant according to Table 95 in the Appendix.³³⁷ Among those with a reputation for sorcery are reckoned those who are directly mentioned during the trial as having a reputation, those who are implicitly mentioned in the sources as having a reputation, and those who have a reputation due to a previous denunciation. This finding suggests that the reputation for sorcery in Finnmark at that time had a much wider range than ethnic Sami persons alone.

From contemporary written sources we know that Sami men in particular were known to be cunning in sorcery. Of the Sami men accused of witchcraft, all of them had a reputation for sorcery due to the actual practice of magic, see Table 96 in the Appendix. Of the Norwegian men accused of witchcraft, three out of four had such a reputation. The situation for women is that 86% of the Norwegian women accused of witchcraft had a reputation for sorcery, while 71% of the Sami women had such a reputation, see Table 97 in the Appendix. These numbers suggest that Sami men were in a special position as far as reputation was concerned, but among the Norwegian women accused, a reputation for sorcery was also very common.

³³⁶ Chi-square 7.083.

³³⁷ Chi-square 0.242.

3.9 *Neighbourhood disputes*

In Europe, neighbourhood disputes have been highlighted as an explanatory factor, frequently focusing on women's roles in local communities. The Finnmark witchcraft documents show that there is a correlation between neighbourhood witnesses and female accused, see Table 98 in the Appendix.³³⁸ Likewise there is a correlation between neighbourhood witnesses and linked trials, see Table 99 in the Appendix.³³⁹ This means that neighbour witnesses were active during linked trials.

When it comes to the confessions, the image is a bit different. The occurrence of neighbourhood disputes given by the accused persons as a motive for performing sorcery is not overwhelming. Only in 26% of the trials with sufficient information neighbour quarrels are mentioned as a reason for evil-doing. Table 85 in the Appendix shows the connection between gender and neighbour quarrels as a motive for performing sorcery. The result is not statistically significant.³⁴⁰ The data suggest that the likelihood of men and women accused of witchcraft mentioning neighbourhood quarrels as motives for performing sorcery is fairly equal.

Even if neighbourhood disputes are not often mentioned as direct motives for performing sorcery, no doubt disagreements related to daily living played a part in many witnesses' testimonies. It was dangerous at the time to fall out with neighbours and often angry and threatening words from such a context were cited in retrospect during a witchcraft trial and interpreted by witnesses and legal officials to have had mortal effect, as has been argued by Robin Briggs. I will return to this discussion in the comparative chapter, as the more detailed qualitative analyses of separate trials might shed more light on what happened in local communities before a suspect was imprisoned.

3.10 *Folk belief*

The representation of folk belief in the Finnmark material is mostly related to weather magic, either Sami sorcery, in which wind was 'sold' to captains on ships, or magic performed by conjuring up a storm in order to cause a ship-wreck. The latter type was often collective sorcery performed by Norwegian women. In 61 cases weather magic was confessed to directly; in 6 cases it was mentioned implicitly, i.e. in an earlier trial. This means that half of the trials were related to this type of magic, thus the location of the witchcraft trials in

³³⁸ Chi-square 15.115.

³³⁹ Chi-square 12.289.

³⁴⁰ Chi-square 0.826.

Finnmark is mirrored in the documents. The *gand* has been mentioned above as one of the types of magic particularly mastered by the Samis.

Healing is confessed to in 11 cases in Finnmark. Fairies are mentioned only once, in a late trial in 1689.³⁴¹ However, these types of magic had existed from old times. When they became of interest to the legal officials during the witchcraft trials, it was because this practice had been demonised and connected to the Devil. Therefore the existence of folk belief in itself cannot be said to explain the witchcraft trials; folk belief had to be attached to demonology during the confession to be regarded as a dangerous crime deserving a death sentence.

3.11 Conclusion

The Finnmark witchcraft trials are special in a national as well as an international context. The material shows characteristic features due to geographical and ethnical conditions. The most conspicuous finding, however, has to do with the influence of demonology on these trials. In a restricted area in the periphery of Europe, the highest percentage of witchcraft trials in Europe in relation to the population is found. This finding calls for attention. The material offers perspectives of interest for witchcraft research throughout Europe. As is seen from the above analyses, the interaction between demonology, panics, types of trial and gender is convincing as an explanation for the sudden emergence of trials characterising the historical witch-hunt. The gender question, considered in isolation, is also prominent in this material, as a number of different approaches show that statistically women were treated significantly differently from men.

³⁴¹ Marit Nilsdatter, SATØ, SF 23, fos. 186v–187v.

4 Mainland Scotland

4.1 Approach

While the analyses in the two previous chapters are based on statistical data, thus showing tendencies in the source material as a whole, the following analyses will – by close-readings of separate court records – be based on detailed linguistic interpretation. The two ways of analysing the primary sources complete each other and are inter-related in that statistical analyses of specific topics create a basis of knowledge on which it is possible to draw as background when it comes to scrutinising the texts. The statistics presented prepare the ground for an understanding of specific topics introduced in my hypothesis, topics which will be deepened in the discourse-focused interpretation in following chapters.

As mentioned in the introductory chapter, I have chosen a narratological approach to the qualitative analysis of the sources. By focusing on narrative discourse, I will try to analyse how the different ‘voices’ of individuals participating in the trial can give us information about witchcraft and attitudes to witchcraft, thus throwing light on important issues related to this field of study: justification of the case; definition of the type of witchcraft to be dealt with in each specific case; reliability of the witnesses’ testimonies; the interrogators’ questioning of the accused; the accused person’s confession; delivery of the verdict, and passing of the sentence. As will be seen, different accents characterise the discourse. By keeping the voices of the scribe, the law, the witnesses and the accused person apart when analysing the text, attention is drawn towards the way the text is told and the functioning of the discourse.

4.2 Margaret Wallace, 1622

4.2.1 General

The choice of the document from Margaret Wallace’s trial for narratological analysis rests on several points.³⁴² The surviving witchcraft document is detailed, with sufficient coherence to be suitable for a narratological analysis. The trial of Margaret Wallace may serve as an example of a relatively early case mirroring this stage of development in legal witchcraft discourse. The trial was held at the justiciary court in Edinburgh and will represent a type of trial in which the professional judicial officials discuss central elements related to the crime of witchcraft, thus displaying attitudes with regard to the legal interpretation of this crime. As

³⁴² I would like to thank Diane Baptie for the transcription of the document.

will be seen from analyses of later local trials, the legal rhetorical discourse in the central trial of Margaret Wallace appears to be more embellished than trials held at local courts, where the legal officials had less judicial training and perhaps less enjoyment in practising legal rhetoric. The trial may thus illustrate witchcraft trials with malefice as the main accusation. The trial is a very good example of a type of after-rationalisation which often occurs in witchcraft trials, based on the linearity of events. Witnesses' testimonies, given after an alleged accident, are used to establish cause and effect relations between an unexpected accident and some words muttered by a person reputed for witchcraft before the accident. The case brings up not only the performance of sorcery but also consultation with reputed witches.

4.2.2 The trial

Margaret Wallace was a woman from Glasgow, married to the craftsman John Dyning. She was arrested without a warrant and accused of *maleficium*, healing and consulting a known witch.³⁴³ According to a note from the Privy Council of Scotland dated 19 February 1622 she was due to be tried in the justiciary court in Edinburgh on 20 March 1622. One or two men in Glasgow would prosecute her case. She had been denounced for witchcraft 'five or six years since' and had been called up in front of the Kirk session of Glasgow for 'railing' followed by disease. She was then accused of killing a minister. This must have been in 1613, as the minister died in 1614.³⁴⁴ During the 1622 trial ten articles were presented, each containing accusations either about malefice, healing or the consultation of two known witches, Christiane Graham and Katherine Blair. A long series of witnesses testified against her. A verdict of guilty was passed, and she was executed at the Castle Hill, Edinburgh.³⁴⁵

4.2.3 The voice of the law

Margaret Wallace was 'Dilaitit of dy[ver]s poyntis of sorcerie incanta[tio]n and witchcraft at lenth spe[cife]it in hir dittay'.³⁴⁶ After the ten arguments against her had been presented, a long discussion between the lawyers over points of law followed. The voice of the law is characterised by very elaborate defence pleadings, in which the prosecution and defence cite different passages.³⁴⁷ The assessors to the judge were James, Archbishop of Glasgow, Sir George Erskyn of Innersteyle and Mr John Weymes of Craigtoun. The jury consisted of 15 individuals, all burgesses of Glasgow, five of them merchants.

³⁴³ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 75r.

³⁴⁴ SSW, sub Margaret Wallace.

³⁴⁵ Fasti, iii, 378; ECA, Edinburgh Town Treasurer's Accounts, iv, (1612–1623), 1136–37.

³⁴⁶ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 59v.

³⁴⁷ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 60v.

The style used in the legal discourse is heavy, with long sentence constructions, something which puts its stamp on the document as a whole. References to divine and secular laws are detailed, for instance the references to the fifth book of the Old Testament:

the devyne Law of almy[gh]tie God set down in his sacred woird specialle in the 20 chap of Leviticus and 18 chap of Deuteronomie Agains the usearis and *practizeris of witchcraft sorcerie charmeing and soothesaying and against the seikeris of help and responsis of thame thraitni[n]g & denu[n]ceing to the co[m]mitteris of sic devillisch practizes the puneishme[n]t of daith [My italics]*.³⁴⁸

As we see here, not only those who practised traditional sorcery but also those who received help from sorcerers were included among those who practised 'witchcraft'. This is an important point because one of the serious charges against Margaret Wallace was that of receiving help from a 'notorious' witch, Christiane Graham, who had already been burnt.

The biblical references are to Leviticus 20:27 and to Deuteronomy 18:10-11. Julian Goodare has pointed out that these verses from Deuteronomy may have influenced the 1563 Witchcraft Act.³⁴⁹ There is an interesting difference between the Geneva Bible of 1560 and the Authorised version of 1611, which might have held significance for the kirk's official understanding of witchcraft. The Geneva Bible says in verses 10-11: 'Let none be found among you that maketh his sonne or his daughter to go through the fire, or that vseth witchcraft, or a regarder of times, or a marker of the flying of soules or a sorcerer // Or a charmer, or that counselleth with spirits or a sothesayer, or that asketh counsel at the dead'.³⁵⁰ The same verses in the 1611 edition say: 'There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his sonne, or his daughter to pass thorow the fire, or that useth diuination or an observer of times, or an inchanter, or a witch // or a charmer, or a consuler with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer'.³⁵¹ The difference between the 1560 and the 1611 editions is that the word 'diuination' has replaced 'witchcraft' in the expression 'that vseth diuination or an observer of times', which might suggest that malefice has been taken into account and understood as part of witchcraft. It is also interesting that the words 'charming and sothesayer' are mentioned in the records, corresponding to the 1560 Bible wording, while in the 1611 edition we do not find the word 'soothsaying', but instead the words 'inchanter', 'witch', 'charmer', 'consuler with familiar spirits' and 'wizard'. It should be noted that 'witchcraft' in the 1560 edition is replaced by 'a witch' in the 1611 edition, a concept individualized and personified. It is interesting that the term 'consuler with familiar spirits'

³⁴⁸ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fos. 75r-75v.

³⁴⁹ Goodare, J., 'The Scottish Witchcraft Act', *Church History*, lxxiv, no. 1 (2005), 39.

³⁵⁰ Geneva Bible (1560).

³⁵¹ *The Holy Bible* (London, 1611), authorised version.

has entered this new authorised 1611 Bible. It is also interesting that ‘necromancy’ is used neither in the Bible nor in the court records’ reference to the Bible, which suggests that the scribe has stuck very firmly to the original manuscripts when quoting, whether from the Bible or Witchcraft Act. It is possible that Deuteronomy 18:10-11 influenced the Witchcraft Act via the inclusion of charming and soothsaying, which might parallel the expression ‘necromancy’ – defined as the summoning of evil spirits for magical purposes – in the Witchcraft Act. It may additionally have influenced the Witchcraft Act by mentioning ‘witchcraft’ as well as ‘sorcerer’, a completion that continued to live in the formulation of the act. If, in the act, there is an allusion to the demonic pact in the word ‘necromancy’ (which has been argued plausibly by Goodare) then the absence of this word in Deuteronomy is relevant for its use in connection with an historical event such as the seventeenth-century witch-hunt.³⁵²

The other biblical reference is to Leviticus 20:27, which in the Geneva edition says: ‘And if a man or a woman haue a spirit of diuination or sothesaying in them they shal dye the death: they shal stone them to death, their blood shalbe vpon them’.³⁵³ The same verse in the 1611 edition says: ‘A man also or a woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shalbe upon them’.³⁵⁴ Again we see that ‘familiar spirit’ has entered into the 1611 edition of the Bible.

It is very interesting that the word ‘devillische’ is mentioned in the court records, as this word is not mentioned in either of the Bible editions, or, as will be seen below, in the Witchcraft Act. Particularly since this case deals with accusations against a maleficent rather than a demonological witch, this mention suggests that by 1622 the link had been implicitly made between malefice and devilish witchcraft. Frequent repetitions of ‘devil’ and ‘devilish’ will be seen in the court records throughout the period of the witch-hunt. When references to the Bible are used in these court records side by side with reference to laws, it suggests that the legal interpretation of witchcraft was that it was a violation of God’s laws as well as the clerical laws.

The reference to secular law here is ‘the 73 act’.³⁵⁵

As also be dy[ver]is actis of p[ar]liament and municipall Lawis of this kingdom alsweill publeist and sett furth be his maiestie in his awin tyme As in the dayis of his maist noble progenitoris Namelie be the 73 act of the parliament haldin be his hienes darrest mother Quene marie of worthie memorie It is expreslie provydit *statute & ordanit that na maner of persone or persones of q[uha]tsome[v]er estait degrie or conditioun thay be of Presume nor tak upone hand to use ony maner of witchcraft sorcerie or*

³⁵² Goodare, ‘Scottish Witchcraft Act’, 62.

³⁵³ Geneva Bible (1560).

³⁵⁴ Authorised Bible, 1611.

³⁵⁵ Goodare, ‘Scottish Witchcraft Act’, 39.

negromancie nor gif tham selfis furth to haif ony sic craft or knowlege thairby abouseing his hienes people & subjectis And that na persone seik ony help respons or consultatioun at ony sic usearis or abusearis foirsaidis under the pane of death alsweill to be execute upone the usear & abusear as the seiker of the respons or consultatioun As in the saidis Lawis and actis of p[ar]liament at mair lenth is contenit [My italics].³⁵⁶

The sentences in italics are almost word for word from the act.³⁵⁷ What has changed is the use of 'witchcraft' in the singular in the records, while the act has the plural, 'Witchcraftis', and the wording 'thairthrow abusand the pepill' in The Witchcraft Act, is here 'abouesing his hienes people & subjectis'. The latter amendment does not change the meaning much, although his highness and his subjects are underlined. The use of the singular for witchcraft might refer to the demonological understanding of witchcraft as a power given from the Devil to one person through the pact.

As malefice was omitted from the Witchcraft Act, the accusation against Margaret Wallace had to be covered by the words witchcraft, sorcery and necromancy. Necromancy might in this case be the most obvious link between Wallace's performance of malefice and the criminalisation of her sorcery. The Witchcraft Act did not mention several key words later taken into use in witchcraft persecution; this might have to do with the intention of its being a device against Catholicism, as suggested by Clark and Goodare.³⁵⁸ Clark has pointed to demonology as working within the confessions of both Catholicism and Protestantism.³⁵⁹ Interesting in this respect is a vernacular catechism as early as 1552, published by the Archbishop of St Andrews to evangelize the laity.³⁶⁰ In fact, it seems that the wording used in the 1552 catechism could be an early draft of the Witchcraft Act, using all the words 'wytche, sorcerar, cownqerar, or siclike disserveris' and 'Wythes, Nigromanceris and siclikes, *workis be operation of the devil under a paction*'.³⁶¹ [My italics.] What is notably omitted in these words in the Witchcraft Act is the demonic pact, which may be ascribed to the difficulties of getting the act passed in contemporary circumstances. It was known that Queen Mary and her counsellors would object to specific words used. However, the idea of the demonic pact was a reality in pre-Reformation times in Scotland. Obviously sermons and religious literature were important in educating people in the Protestant faith. However, legislation was also important in this respect, as is seen from the court records of Margaret Wallace.

³⁵⁶ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 75v.

³⁵⁷ Edward Henryson, ed., *Actis and Constitutionis of the Realme of Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1566. Ref. Goodare, 'Scottish Witchcraft Act', 39.

³⁵⁸ Goodare, 'Scottish Witchcraft Act', 59; Clark, *Thinking with Demons*, ch. 35.

³⁵⁹ Clark, s., 'Protestant Demonology: Sin, Superstition, and Society (c.1520–c.1630)', B. Ankarloo and G. Henningsen (eds.), *Early Modern European Witchcraft. Centres and Peripheries* (Oxford, 1993), 47.

³⁶⁰ Larner, *Enemies*, 163.

³⁶¹ Larner, *Enemies*, 163.

Margaret Wallace's practice of sorcery, as well as her consultation of a known witch, is emphasised in the records. As seen from the discussion above, the term *maleficium* was not used in the act, and it was not used in legal discourse, although there was no doubt that Wallace was a maleficent witch, a person with power to perform sorcery from knowledge or inherent talents in addition to the use of charms and objects, rather than power obtained by a pact with the Devil.

After the assize was made known the accused made objections to four of the persons. The objection against the first was that he had contracted an evil will against her husband. The Justice admitted him. The objection against the second was that he was brother-in-law to one of her alleged 'victims'. He was to stand down and another was called. The objection against the third was that he was brother-in-law to one of the informers. He was admitted because he was not a pursuer. The objection against the fourth was that he 'should not be admitted as she had sold him drugs which he had not paid for, she had then taken him to court and an enmity had arisen between them. He was nonetheless admitted'.³⁶² These objections show that this witchcraft trial followed standard legal procedure, where the accused person was heard and had somebody to speak for her.

There was considerable legal argument between the pursuers and defenders and members of the assize during the case.³⁶³ An effort to keep the standards of normal legal procedure is seen all through the trial. After the final reading of the accusations against Margaret Wallace, 'The justice nochtw[]thstanding of dy[ver]is allegeances maid be hir & hir procu[ra]toris agains the relevance th[air]of *Quhilkis war all repellit in respect of the dittay* and my lord advocattis answwis maid in fortificatioun th[air]of'. [*My italics.*]³⁶⁴ The italicised phrase shows that Wallace and her procurators were allowed to have their protests heard, even if these were rejected.

During the final parts of the trial the charges against Margaret Wallace and the dual reference to the laws were repeated, 'be sorcerie witchcraft charmeing and incantatioun and uth[er]is Devillish and unlaw[fu]ll means expreslie prohibetit and forbidden be the Lawis of almytie god and municipall Lawis of this kingdome'.³⁶⁵ It was also stressed that the verdict in this actual case should have an effect upon the people in general: 'The said margaret wallace hes contravenit the tenno[u]r of the saidis Lawis & actis of p[ar]liament and incurrit the panes

³⁶² NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 67r.

³⁶³ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fos. 71v–75r.

³⁶⁴ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 78r.

³⁶⁵ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 77v.

& puneishme[n]t of daith set doun th[air]intill q[ui]lk aucht & sould be execute upone hir w[i]th all rigour to the terro[u]r & example of utheris heireftir'.³⁶⁶

The actions taken before the verdict was delivered are described in detail:

The saidis persones of assyse removet altogidder furth of court to the assyse hous q[uai]r thay be pluralitie of voittis electit & choset the said Johnne Lawsoun in chancellor Ressonit & voittit upone the poyntis of the said dittay And being ryple & at lenth advyset th[ai]rw[i]th togidder w[i]th the depositiones of the witnessis ressavit sworne & admittit in th[ai]r p[resen]s and audience & uth[e]r depositiones producet in proces to that effect reenterit agane in court quhair thay be the repourt and judiciall declaratioun of the said chancellor ffand pronu[n]cet & declairit *for the maist p[ai]rt the said margaret wallace to be fylet culpable & convict of the foure severall poyntis & articles of dittay abone writtin and of the generall poynt abone spec[ife]it subscrivet th[air]to [My italics]*.³⁶⁷

The expression italicised above shows firstly that the assize was divided, with a minority voting to acquit, and secondly that she was found guilty of witchcraft. Like most of the Scottish witches sentenced to death Margaret Wallace was taken to the place of execution 'And th[air] to be wirreit at ane staik to the deid and hir body th[air]eftir to be brunt in ashes And all hir moveabill guidis to be escheit & inbrocht to o[u]r sov[er]ane lordis use and uth[e]ris haifand ryt th[air]to as culpable & convict of the saidis crymes'.³⁶⁸ The voice of the law during the closure of the trial is a steady and determined one. There are no extenuating features to be traced.

4.2.4 The voice of the accused person

Margaret Wallace's voice is rendered either by the witnesses or in the legal discourse. The first time we hear her own uttered words is in article 8 of the dittay, where her quarrel with William Mure, flesher, is rendered, a dispute which had arisen because he had called Cristiane Graham a rank witch. Margaret allegedly said to him, 'Goe thy wayis hame bludie boutcher that thow art thow sall nevir sie the calsay againe bot sall suddanlie schute to deid in thy awin chyre'.³⁶⁹ The next day he died in his own chair. Another episode was her quarrel with Cuthbert Greg. Cristiane Graham was involved also here. Graham had desired a dog from him. This he refused, 'Answring to hir agane I rather ye and my hussie baith (meanding be margaret wallace) war brunt or ye get my dog'.³⁷⁰ When Margaret Wallace got knowledge of this, she said to him, 'fals land ploupper loun that thow art sayes thow that cristiane grahame

³⁶⁶ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 78r.

³⁶⁷ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 78r.

³⁶⁸ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 78v.

³⁶⁹ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 62r.

³⁷⁰ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 68r.

and I sall be brunt for witches I vow to god I sall do to ye ane evill turne'.³⁷¹ 'Foure or five dayis' afterwards Cuthbert Greg fell sick. However he recovered. He was asked before the court whether he had heard her utter the words that 'he sould mak hir (*sic*) w[i]thin few dayis nocht of habilitie to wyn ane caik of breid denyis that he hard sic woirdis bot only scho sould do him ane evill turne'.³⁷² His sickness was one of 'sweitting and brotheing' and he 'was nocht able to gang'. Related to another accusation of sickness, Jon Robertson testified 'that the said margaret wallace avowit to be avenget upone his flesche and that schortlie th[air]eftir conforme to the dittay the s[ai]d seiknes was laid upone him'.³⁷³ Two events happened consecutively, one being the uttering of threatening words by Margaret Wallace, the other being sudden sickness that affected the threatened person. In addition to the addressee of the uttered words, the time factor connects these two events. Behind this logic lies a conviction that words uttered by witches are endangering.

An episode involving Christiane Grahame was told by one of the witnesses, Marion Mitchell. She said that during a visit at Alexandre Vallange's, Margaret Wallace suddenly became sick and 'was sa extremelie handillit that scho was liklie to ryve hir selff'.³⁷⁴ Two persons had to hold her. She asked for Christiane Grahame to come to help her, and she did. 'Sayis th[ai]reftir that Cristiane grahame tuik margaret wallace be the schaikill bane [*the wrist*] and kist hir and in hir airmes cayreit hir doun the stair saying to hir nothing sould aill hir'.³⁷⁵ Afterwards the sickness was transferred to Margaret Montgomery's child. The morning after this, Margaret Wallace came to see the child and asked the child's mother 'to send for Cristiane grahame making all that tyme ane grit mone for the bairnes seiknes To quhome m[ar]garet montgomerie ans writ I haif nothing ado w[i]th Cristiane grahame and will nocht send for hir for gif God hes laid on that seiknes on my bairne he will at his awin plessour tak it af againe'.³⁷⁶ Still Margaret Wallace wanted to send for her, 'Gif ye knew Cristiane grahame skeill and q[uha]t scho can do ye wald nocht refuis to send for hir for scho can do als mekill as god in the heavin'.³⁷⁷ In addition Margaret Wallace 'maist blasphemouslie and devillischlie ans writ agane that the said Cristiane grahame culd do als mekill in that eirand in cureing of that diseas as gif God him selff wald cum out of hevin &

³⁷¹ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 68r.

³⁷² NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 68r.

³⁷³ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 68v.

³⁷⁴ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 69r.

³⁷⁵ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 69r.

³⁷⁶ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 69v.

³⁷⁷ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 69v.

cure hir'.³⁷⁸ These stories were told with pride by Margaret Wallace. The admiration and respect Margaret Wallace had for Christiane Grahame and her knowledge was based on devotion. There are no signals in the document denoting fear on the part of Margaret Wallace. On the contrary, she seemed to trust Christiane Grahame and her mastery of her craft.

There also seems to be a considerable interest in rituals performed by the alleged witches, judging by the description in the records. Margaret Wallace's removal of Cuthbert's sickness is described thus: 'At quhais cu[m]ing scho to manifest hir skill for his help tuik him be the schaikill bane w[i]th the ane hand And laid hir uthir hand upone his breist and w[i]thout ony word speiking saif only to moveing of hir lipis past fra him at that instant'.³⁷⁹ A ritual performed by Christiane Grahame and Margaret Wallace together to cure the child mentioned above is described thus:

the said m[ar]garet liftit up the bairnes heid and the said Cristiane tuik hir be the shaikill bane and brocht the bairne furth of hir bed q[uha]ir scho was lying bedfast in grit payne of befoir and th[ai]reftir setting hir doun upone ane stuile w[i]th sum croces & signes maid upone hir And be uttering of dy[ver]is woirdis (nocht knawin quhat thay war) restoiret hir to hir helth³⁸⁰

It seems that the two women were working together trying to cure sickness, 'the said m[ar]garet wallace w[i]th the said Cristiane grahame past that same nyt betwix ellevin and twelf ho[u]ris under silence & clud of nyt to the yaird of James fynlay burges of glesgow quhair thay remanit the space of ane hour togidder practizeing sorcerie & witchcraft for cureing of the said bairne'.³⁸¹ Both of them obviously liked to use their craft, for instance Margaret Wallace 'geving out hir selff to haif skill in the cure of the said seiknes'.³⁸² Margaret Wallace referred to the deceased Christiane Grahame to a surprising degree, both in terms of quotations and in terms of descriptions of Graham's sorcery rituals. Even if Christiane Graham was not in court in person, she still played a role through stories about her being retold. Two knowledgeable women tried to cure sick persons, but they were also aware of their reputation and wanted to get paid for their 'jobs'. It seems they were laying on hands and taking off sickness. Miller maintains that charming, or folk healing, 'provided society with means to counter the threat of malicious witchcraft'.³⁸³ But in the case of Wallace, as well as many other accused women, the voice of the law forced healing activities to be interpreted within a demonic frame.

³⁷⁸ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 76v.

³⁷⁹ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 76r.

³⁸⁰ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 76v.

³⁸¹ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 77r.

³⁸² NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 77r.

³⁸³ Miller, 'Devices and directions', 105.

4.2.5 The voices of the witnesses

Four witnesses were brought before the court. Their testimonies contain renderings of what they heard Margaret Wallace utter in different situations. They also describe in detail having seen the sick Cuthbert. In addition, a witness document, a warrant written by the archbishop of Glasgow relating to the trial of Christiane Grahame, was read out in court to prove Margaret Wallace's relation with the executed person. The same document was read to Christiane Grahame before her execution.³⁸⁴

4.2.6 The voice of the scribe

The scribe's voice is subdued. He makes no effort to intervene or intrude, and seems to agree with the dominant legal code in the text. A sensitivity to variations in language can be noted; When rendering the discourse of the legal officials, heavy rhetoric based on the written laws dominates; when rendering the accused person or the witnesses, the oral field of language dominates and is particularly detailed during the rendering of the charms and incantations.

Even if this was not a demonic trial, the word 'devillisch' was used to denote the type of sorcery Margaret Wallace was accused of having committed, which would be punished by death. Words originating from 'devil' are mentioned nine times in the records, in phrases like 'hir devilische meanis', 'hir divilrie & witchcraft', 'hir devillische charmes', 'the said margaret wallace maist blasphemouslie and devillischlie answrit agane', 'hir devillische airt alsweill for cureing of hir selff', 'hir devillrie sorcerie & witchcraft', 'hir devillische practizes' and 'witches & sorceraris instrumentis of the devill'. These words are connected to Margaret Wallace's way of performing sorcery as well as the practise of those whom she had consulted. An interesting sentence in which the word 'devil' is used was uttered by Margaret Montgomery, one of the witnesses. She was the mother of the child Margaret Wallace had allegedly cast sickness upon, and had then wanted to send for Christiane Graham to have the sickness taken away: 'And the said margaret montgomerie haifing (a word after 'haifing' crossed out) absolutelie refuisit sa to do saying to hir scho wald co[m]mit hir bairne to God and nocht mell w[i]th the devill or ony of his instrumentis' [My italics].³⁸⁵ This remark suggests that by this time there was a common understanding in the community that curing sickness by using charms was the work of the Devil. But this is the only place in the document where 'devil' is used by one of the witnesses; in all other instances the word is used in legal discourse to denote Margaret Wallace's practice or the practice of one of the other reputed witches she had consulted.

³⁸⁴ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 76v.

³⁸⁵ NAS, Books of Adjournal, JC2/6, fo. 76v.

4.2.7 Conclusion

Margaret Wallace's case shows that several terms not mentioned in the Witchcraft Act had found their way to the courtroom and were used in legal argumentation by 1622. Even if the Witchcraft Act was cited, the scope of arguments for Wallace's crime by far extended the expressions written down in the act. In the court records of Wallace's case it becomes clear that malefice was considered a serious crime. The Devil was frequently mentioned in relation to malefice. Practising healing and charming was interpreted by the law as ungodly and devilish. The references to the Bible as well as to the Witchcraft Act show that this type of crime was considered to be a violation against divine as well as clerical laws. Thus the case serves as a good example of support for an interpretation of the witch-hunt's purpose as cleaning the country from ungodliness. At the same time it seems clear that demonological ideas centred round the Devil had penetrated the discourse of the judges and were used repeatedly in argumentation, while the case was not the same for the peasants or the accused. This suggests an interpretational practice in the court in which the restrictions implied in the Witchcraft Act were actively exceeded by pressing the boundaries of *maleficium* to equal demonological ideas, thus signalling a harsher climate in the legal treatment of sorcery.

4.3 Margaret Duchill, 1658

4.3.1 Approach

Society in the seventeenth century as an oral society is mentioned as one of the factors constituting my hypothesis. It is important to remember this factor with regard to the spread of demonological ideas among the common people. Stories were spread as part of an oral tradition.³⁸⁶ One contribution to show how demonological ideas spread and assimilated into popular mentality throughout the seventeenth century will be close-readings of witchcraft confessions, exploring the demonological contents of the confessions. Therefore in this chapter I would like to focus on the elements of a demonological confession as it appears in central Scotland in the late 1650s.

The document to be studied here is a confession given by Margaret Duchill before the Presbytery of Alloa on 11 May 1658.³⁸⁷ As she died before her confession was heard at the Presbytery session on 23 June, her confession before the presbytery was read aloud during a court meeting at which justices of peace were present: 'The said brethren and justices of peace

³⁸⁶ Fox, A., *Oral and Literate Culture in England, 1500–1700* (Oxford, 2000) 194, 196.

³⁸⁷ I would like to thank Diane Baptie for the transcription of the document.

present having receavit and at lenth heard & considerit ane paper under the hand of Mr James Meldrum Session clerk of alloway bearing the confessioun of Margaret Duchill (who is now dead) of witchcraft and dilating others the tennor of w[hi]ch paper is heirby appoyntit to be insert and is accordinglie done as followes'.³⁸⁸ So in fact here we have a document taken down into script from an oral confession and passed on orally to an audience that would use the contents in order to get evidence to try other alleged witches. Speech is the transmitter of information.

4.3.2 The case

Two primary documents exist connected to the trial of Margaret Duchill. The minutes from Stirling Presbytery mentioned above and the records from Stirling Court, 1659.³⁸⁹ The Presbytery Minutes give the confession of Margaret Duchill. A subsequent pre-trial dossier gives the confession of four witches later imprisoned and tried because of Duchill's denunciation. She is mentioned in a letter from Major James Holburne accompanying the pre-trial document, 'For the right honourable the commissioners for administration of justice in criminal causses to the people of Scotland', sent on 8 July 1658.³⁹⁰ This letter also mentions that five women had been apprehended lately upon suspicion of witchcraft. 'One of them who was first under restraint confessed the renunciation of her baptisme, and that she did enter into Covenant with the Devill and committed many murders and other mischiefs; but she died in the place of her restraint.'³⁹¹ In this document Duchill is repeatedly mentioned in the confessions by the women later accused and in the testimonies of the witnesses, and thus information about her comes up retrospectively.³⁹² The two primary documents complement each other, as will be seen below, and give valuable information about the linked trials of Alloa in 1658-9. A secondary source about the witches of Alloa is an article from 1908, which gives a summary of the main points of Duchill's confession.³⁹³ These trials, including a study of Margaret Duchill, have also been discussed by Maxwell-Stuart.³⁹⁴

According to Stirling Presbytery Minutes, on 19 May 1658 Mr George Bennett and Mr Matthias Sympson were appointed to go to Alloa to 'conferr with' the persons who were

³⁸⁸ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 90.

³⁸⁹ BL, Egerton MS 2879. I would like to thank Julian Goodare for letting me read his transcription of this document.

³⁹⁰ BL, Egerton MS 2879, fo. 1r.

³⁹¹ BL, Egerton MS 2879, fo. 1r.

³⁹² BL, Egerton MS 2879, fos. 3r-16r.

³⁹³ Fergusson, R. M., 'The Witches of Alloa', *Scottish Historical Review*, iv (1908), 40-8.

³⁹⁴ Maxwell-Stuart, P. G., *An Abundance of Witches* (Gloucestershire, 2005), 92-106.

imprisoned for witchcraft.³⁹⁵ The next presbytery session was appointed for 23 June at Alloa ‘for emergent occasiounes th[ai]r particularlie for trying and examining those q[uh]o ar th[ai]r apprehendit for witches and endeavoring to bring th[e]m to confessioun & convictioun’.³⁹⁶ In other words, there was a situation to be dealt with immediately.

Those present at the presbytery session in Alloa on 23 June were the moderator Mr Archibald Muschett, and the younger ministers George Bennett, Robert Wright, Matthias Symson, John Craigengelt, the Laird of Clakmannan, the Lairds of Menstrie & Tullibodie and Mr Robert Bruce of Kennet, Justice of the Peace, were also present ‘be virtew of th[ai]r offices anent the trying of the witches’.³⁹⁷ Two of the younger ministers were the ones who had arrived from Stirling to ‘confer’ with the imprisoned witches.

The accused persons had been imprisoned for more than a month when the presbytery meeting of 23 June took place. Margaret Duchill had been interrogated before 11 May, when she ‘confessid that sche haid said to william Moresone eldar that if they sould tak & burne her there sould better wyves in alloway nor herself be burnt with her’.³⁹⁸ A letter was then sent to the justices of the peace, delivered by one of the elders and the clerk of the session, and they returned an order, ‘direct to the Constables of alloway to secure her persone in closs prison and ane guard night and day attending her, and eftir severall visits maid be the Minister & some eldaris with many gude exhorta[tio]unes & pithie prayeris with severall demands concerning th[a]t sinne of witchcraft, so did at last confess’.³⁹⁹ Sleep deprivation was the most common torture method used in Scotland. Duchill must have died between 19 May, when the two ministers at the presbytery meeting at Stirling were appointed to go to Alloa, and 23 June. It is unclear whether she was dead before 3 June, when the four other women were interrogated. Three of these, Kathrine Remy, Bessie Paton and Margaret Tailyeor, were extrajudicially tortured and burnt with hot stones by four local men. The witchcraft suspects were confronted with each other to get more information. No further action was taken.⁴⁰⁰ The women seem to have been ordinary women from the parish. We know that one of them was married and had children. Margaret Duchill used to work at spinning during daytime, noting in her confession that she went to ‘the Calsey and span on my rok till night’.⁴⁰¹

³⁹⁵ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6 p. 89.

³⁹⁶ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6 p. 90.

³⁹⁷ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6 p. 90.

³⁹⁸ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 90.

³⁹⁹ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 90.

⁴⁰⁰ The Survey, sub Margaret Tailyeor.

⁴⁰¹ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 91. Calsey seems to be a place name, as it is written with capital letter, but ‘the calsey’ might also mean the causeway or the street.

The case against the four women denounced by Margaret Duchill was finished on 24 June. In the final statement the presbytery, together with the Justices of the Peace, had an interesting formulation related to the gravity of the four women's guilt, in which they distinguish between Margaret Tayleor and the other three,

finding that Margaret tayleor hes clairlie confest witchcraft and *express pactioun with the devill and some malefices* and th[a]t th[ai]r ar great presumptiounes that *the other thrie ar guyltie of witchcraft* doe th[ai]rfore judge it expedient that a letter be writtin in name of this meiting to the judges competent in criminal causes representing the case forsaid unto th[e]m, and desyring that they may tak cours with the s[ai]ds women as accords of the Law [*My italics*].⁴⁰²

This is an interesting distinction, because it suggests that confession of the demonic pact and malefice was looked upon and treated more seriously than confession of 'witchcraft' in general. It seems that the others did confess to the demonic pact. But in spite of the confessions made and the confrontations which were arranged before the session, the four women refused to confirm their previous confessions. However, during their trials in 1659 they confessed to the demonic pact as well as confirming their previous confessions.⁴⁰³

The presbytery apparently saw a witchcraft case as an important one to handle. Still, they had other duties to carry through. A silent sigh from the brethren may be heard in the last sentence of the minutes of 24 June, after having struggled with four witches who refused for two long days to confirm their previous confessions extracted during torture: 'In regaird that the day is now spent and that the brethren cannot entir this night on th[ai]r other pr[es]b[yte]riall bussiness & refer[ence]s, doe th[ai]rfore adjourne th[ai]r meitting till the morrow at 8 a cloak in the morning'.⁴⁰⁴ Even if two of the brethren were asked 'to goe to the saides four women apairt and seriouslie & gravlie by prayer & exhorta[tio]un to deall with them towards confessioun & endeavor to convince th[e]m of th[ai]r haynous offencis', report was made the next day that this expedition was in vain – 'but fand no more from th[e]m nor wes formerlie confest be th[e]m'.⁴⁰⁵

The Egerton manuscript throws additional light on Duchill's case through testimonies of witnesses. Hendrie Towart declared on oath that Margaret Duchill said

that Elisabeth Blak was hir brother Thomas Duchall his death and that shoe was as great ane witch as hir self, and that shoe laid seiknes on her awne son and came to hir to tak it aff againe, quhilk the said Margaret did and laid it on the said Elisabeth hir awne horse, who died immediatly, and thairafter the said Elisabeth did exclame against hir and called hir witch for doeing thair off.⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰² NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 96.

⁴⁰³ BL, Egerton MS 2879, fos. 4r–7v.

⁴⁰⁴ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 97.

⁴⁰⁵ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 97.

⁴⁰⁶ BL, Egerton MS 2879, fo. 8v.

At the end of the testimonies against Elisabeth Blak a paragraph is added. 'Bessie Patoun (wha is brunt) did declare whill shoe was in prison at Alloway that Elisabeth Blak, wpone ane anger against hir awne sone James Demperstoun, did lay on ane heavie seiknes wpon him'.⁴⁰⁷ After Elisabeth Blak had gone to Bessie Patoun and asked her to take off the sickness, and she refused, she went to Margaret Duchill and bade her do it, which she did. The testimonies from the witnesses indicate that the women accused of witchcraft knew each other and also had the reputation of being charmers and healers. As Margaret Duchill's name came up several times, she was one of these reputed persons.

4.3.3 The interrogation

How can a reader today possibly find out what happened during the witchcraft interrogations? One approach is to scrutinise the document looking for indications of questions posed by the interrogators, so-called shadow questions. Such questions have to be constructed in retrospect by the researcher as the answers indicate what the questions were. Another method is to look for direct indications of questions in the records. The case of Margaret Duchill is one wherein such evidence is found. In her itemised confession consisting of six points, four contain the formulation 'being asked'. After the first point, which contains her narrative about the pact and the rituals related to it, the second point contains her answers to specific questions, '*sche being asked* what evill scho haid done in the said service the said 20 yeires sche answerit the first wrong th[a]t evir sche did wes to Bessie Vertie and *being askit* q[uha]t wrong sche did to her sche answerit sche took her lyfe and *being asked* what way sche took her lyfe and for q[uha]t cause' [*My italics*].⁴⁰⁸ The questions had to do with the severity of her sorcery. The next questions had to do with her confessing to being the cause of the death of a twelve-year-old girl, John Demperstoune's daughter: Margaret Duchill '*being asked* what ailed her at th[a]t young lass', and related to the same event, '*sche being asked be the Minister* how could ane tug of ane arme or ane dunsh on the back or shaking of hands be the death of any bodie' [*My italics*].⁴⁰⁹ We see that her motives for performing evil as well as the inexplicable in her witchcraft power are themes the minister liked to have more information about. The last questions posed to her had to do with denunciation of other women: '*sche being askit* what were the women th[a]t sche said if sche were burnt sould be burnt with her sche answerit th[a]t sche haid beine at severall meittings with the divell and syndrie women with her and

⁴⁰⁷ BL, Egerton MS 2879, fo. 9v.

⁴⁰⁸ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 91.

⁴⁰⁹ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 91.

being asked who they were' [*My italics*].⁴¹⁰ The last question of course led to the naming of the other women who were apprehended. This is a good example of how a panic could arise from the confession of the first imprisoned person.

The purpose of all the questions posed during the interrogation was to push the confession further on specific points, namely what kind of evil-doing she had performed, her motives for performing evil and the names of other persons who had participated in witches' meetings. Of special interest is the question from the minister about her power, a question which required an answer related to her receiving power from the Devil. The questions asked here circle around demonological notions. Even if there does not seem to be any questionnaire involved in the interrogation, as there sometimes was in Central Europe,⁴¹¹ the questions posed here contribute to explaining the rapid growth of a witchcraft panic. All the questions were presumably answered by Margaret Duchill in a state of bewilderment due to sleep deprivation. It seems clear that the interrogators tried to take advantage of her distress and lead her confession in the direction they wanted.

The use of leading questions during interrogation is evident in the Egerton manuscript as well. At the end of the manuscript there is a declaration by J. Craigengelt, who had heard the confession of Margaret Duchill. He testified that Duchill, 'who died a confessed witche in firmance in our toune of Alloway' was asked by the minister

if shoe would be content to be brunt and they should burne Elspit Blak with hir, shoe ansueared, with all my heart even, tomorrou if ye will, The minister said O what a great envy and malice hath shoe against this Elspit Blak, She said again, I have good reason to envy hir, hir mother was my brothers death; Well, said the minister, and ye war the death of hir daughter, who answeared, it is true and weell allowed the same.⁴¹²

The oral tone is evident in this citation, in which the dialogue between Margaret Duchill and the minister is rendered, and the minister's attitude towards her witchcraft is clear. When the minister visited her before she was burnt, this was 'not as a witch bot as a dying woman'.⁴¹³ In other words, he was preparing her for death. She was asked by him

if nou shoe would forgive all them who had wronged hir, shee said, shoe would, and being asked more particularly be the said minister, if shoe would forgive Elspit Blak, shoe ansueared shoe would never

⁴¹⁰ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 91.

⁴¹¹ Voltmer, R., 'Netzwerk, Denkollektiv oder Dschungel?', *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung*, 34:3 (2007), 486–7; Voltmer, R., 'Hexenjagd im Territorium der Reichsabtei St Maximin vor Trier', in Reichert, W., Minn, G., and Voltmer, R., *Quellen zur geschichte des Rhein- Maas- Raumes* (Trier, 2006), 249–50; Behringer, W., *Hexen und Hexenprozesse* (München, 1995), 279–81.

⁴¹² BL, Egerton MS 2879, fo. 15r.

⁴¹³ BL, Egerton MS 2879, fo. 15r.

forgive hir, the minister said how shall then God forgive you, if ye will not forgive your neighbour shoe ansueared, I did nevir such offence to God as shoe did to me, I will nevir forgive hir.⁴¹⁴

She also confessed, after being asked, that she had been a witch for twenty-two years and that Elisabeth Blak learned from her, ‘and agane being asked hou long has Elspit Blak beene a witch then, shoe ansueared nyne years’.⁴¹⁵ The final sentence about Margaret Duchill is even more interesting: ‘Then all admired the lying and envy of the said Margaret Duchell aganst [sic] the said Elspit Blak, and thought good to testifie the same, lest the said Elspit Black should come ondir hazard of hir lyf by the malice and envy of the said defunct Margaret Duchell confessed witch’.⁴¹⁶ The attempt to hinder a trial for Elisabeth Black was successful this year, but she was arrested and tried again in 1662. The outcome of the trial is not known.

4.3.4 Demonological elements

The presbytery minutes document a wide range of demonological ideas based on oral narratives confessed by the five women involved. The richness of detail and the unity of elements we hear repeated in the confessions by one accused person after another suggest that these narratives are part of an oral tradition well known in the community. This can be no coincidence. Individuals probably told these stories to each other and when pressed during their interrogation, they retold these stories as answers to leading questions – just in the way the interrogators wanted to hear it.

The pact with the Devil is the first point in Margaret Duchill’s confession and the most important one, as all the other points are subordinate to this. She had been in the Devil’s service for 20 years and met him first

in Issobell Jamesones litle house q[uhai]r sche dwelt her self all alone, and who came in to me to the said house in the likeness of a man with broune cloathes and ane litle blak hatt, who asked her, what ailleth yow sche answerit I am ane poore bodie and cannot gett q[uhai]ron to live, he said ye sall *not want* if yow will doe my bidding and he gave me fyve shilling & bade me goe buy ane pek of meill with it, and I went to the tron and bought ane pek of peis meill with it, and *it wes gude money*. I brought it home & bakit bannoks, and he sent me for ane chopine of aill and *wee did eate & drink together*.⁴¹⁷
[*My italics.*]

This confession resembles many other witchcraft confessions in Scotland, not only as far as the main content is concerned, but also with regard to specific phrases, such as the Devil’s offer that she should not want, she would be secure. This points to some important hinges for transference of oral narratives, namely short and pointed expressions, which makes the

⁴¹⁴ BL, Egerton MS 2879, fo. 15r.

⁴¹⁵ BL, Egerton MS 2879, fo. 16r.

⁴¹⁶ BL, Egerton MS 2879, fo. 16r.

⁴¹⁷ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 91.

narrative easy to remember and easy to retell. The phrase 'gude money' indicates that it did not turn into leaves or dung, as the Devil's money sometimes did. In addition, the meal with the Devil as part of the ritual is frequently found in demonological witchcraft cases; one could take in the power of the Devil's witchcraft through food and drink, bringing into the picture the inverted communion, in this case eating and drinking to become the child of the Evil Master.

Sexual intercourse as part of the ritual is found in some countries, in others not. The Scottish confessions have this element present, but it differs from, for instance, Germany, in terms of the extent of the sexual orgies. It also differs from Finnmark, where the confessions do not contain this element as part of the pact or meeting. So Scotland is in a middle position. In the case of Margaret Duchill, this element is described thus: 'And q[uhe]n I came in, he wes in the house and bade me close the doore and q[uhe]n I went to my bed he came in over to me & lay with me all night and he causit me to ly on my face and he gatt on abone me and haid to doe with me, and grunkled [*grunted*] abone me lyke a kow'.⁴¹⁸ In the image portrayed here, the woman plays the subordinate part in more than one sense. But there is no sign of resistance to the intercourse on the woman's part. Whether or not she was easily tempted by the Devil, the text does not say, so the argument set forth by some demonologists, that women were easily tempted, cannot be supported from this text.⁴¹⁹ Instead the text appears to support an interpretation that she seemed to be tempted more by the prospect of 'not wanting' and a good meal, rather than the prospect of sexual intercourse.

Renouncing baptism, a new name, the Devil's mark and a loyalty for ever are ingredients that belong to the demonic pact. In Scotland particularly, it was common to have a new name.⁴²⁰ So also here, 'Thereftir he said to me Magie will yee be my servant And I said I wold be his servant, then he said ye most quyte God and yo[u]r baptisme, which I did and he gave me his mark on my eyebrie by ane nip and bade me q[uhe]nsoevir ye wold have me call upon me by my name Johne and I sall nevir leave yow but doe any thing to yow that yow bide me'.⁴²¹ All these elements are found in demonological confessions from other places as well, even the notion that the eyebrow is important. In the material from Finnmark, one of the accused women confessed that the executioner, who tortured her, cut off her eyebrows because the Devil was supposed to be inside.⁴²²

⁴¹⁸ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 91.

⁴¹⁹ This is one of the points characterising women in *Malleus Maleficarum*.

⁴²⁰ SSW has a search option for 'New name'.

⁴²¹ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 91.

⁴²² Marit Tamisdatter, 1634, SATØ, AF, no. 2543.

What kind of evil was performed and why the accused performed it also comes to the fore during the confessions. This is a point of interest with regard to a socio-economic explanation of witchcraft because the accused person frequently gave such reasons as a dispute at work or neighbourhood disputes which required revenge. So also here,

sche [*her friend*] answerit that *sche & I discordit at the pow of alloway bearing coalles*, and I went to the divell and sought a mends of her, and he said to me q[uha]t will yow have of her And I said her lyfe, then said he goe to her house the morne and *tak her be the hand and sche sal nevir doe any more gude* which I did and sche p[rese]ntlie took seiknes q[uhai]rof sche died [*My italics*].⁴²³

Disagreement and quarrelling with neighbours, as expressed in confessions, were related to everyday situations. Money was part of this. The next motive Margaret Duchill gave had to do with money: Jonet Houston would not pay her the money she owed her, ‘and q[uhe]n I craved her sche said sche cared not for me, I went & complained to the divell and sought her lyfe who bade me goe to her the morne and crave her agayne, and if sche pay yow not tak her a dunsh upon the back and sche sall nevir doe no more gude which I did & sche pyned away ay & q[ui]lll sche died’.⁴²⁴ With reference to oral discourse, there is a double negative – a type of repetition – ‘sche sall nevir doe no more gude’, which suggests that these narratives contained expressions easy to remember.

In the confession we also hear the discourse of one of her victims, rendered in the episode in which she fell into a dispute with the twelve-year-old Johne [*Joan*] Demperstoune, daughter of Elisabeth Blak. Margaret Duchill said that the reason for doing her harm was this:

I going allong the bridge of alloway *sche run[n]ing by me touched me*, and I said q[uha]t ailleth the lass to touch me, *sche answerit away witch theiff*, I went to the divell & socht a mends, he bade me the first tyme I saw her to tak ane tug of her arme and sche sould blood to death which I died (*sic*) and the lass went home & p[rese]ntlie bled to death. [*My italics*].⁴²⁵

The girl apparently knew Margaret Duchill’s reputation for sorcery and called her a witch. In those days it might be dangerous to be called a witch, since the legal reaction was so strong. The minister was interested in her ability to perform witchcraft, and in her own words her strength was unlimited, ‘scho answerit that eftir sche gatt the word from Johne her master sche wold have done it to the greatest man or woman in the world’.⁴²⁶

Shape-shifting was often related to collective sorcery operations. In Margaret Duchill’s confession she gives the background for a collective sorcery operation, in which the

⁴²³ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 91.

⁴²⁴ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 91.

⁴²⁵ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 91.

⁴²⁶ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 91.

element of shape-shifting is easily placed. Another woman, Jonet Black, had been refused snuff from William Moreson because she had no money to pay for it,

and for w[hi]ch cause the same night sche conveyed with her self Bessie paton margaret Talzeor kathrine Rainy & me the said Margaret duchill, and wee all being together fand the said william Moresone at his owne backsyde whom wee did violentlie draw by armes & shoulderis through yce & snow to Walter Murrays barne where wee thought to have drowned him in ane holl, but he crying god be mercifull to me, they all fled from him but my self who came home at his back lyke a black dog *but he saw me not*, all which the said willia[m] Moresone did divers tymes long tyme before this declair th[a]t he wes mightilie fearit *but nevir knew till this confessioun [My italics]*.⁴²⁷

Whether or not William Morrison was attacked by dogs we do not know, but he confirmed in front of the session that he was scared by the women. Through the telling of this event several names of other witches were revealed, which made it possible to call in other women.

The Egerton manuscript gives additional information about Duchill's alleged shape-shifting. Barbara Erskine confessed on 14 March 1659 that 'about thrie yeirs since or thairby Margaret Talyor, Jonet Blak, Bessie Paton and Margaret Duchell did goe to the Blak Grainge and perished a boat thair with fyve persones thairin, but shoe and Margaret Duchell stayed in the Cambus till they had done: And they wer in the lyknes of corbies'.⁴²⁸ The same Barbara was confronted with another accused person, James Kirk, on 14 March 1659 and 'did most boldly affirme that the said James was at twa severall meittings with them in the cuning yaird and plaed on his whisle to them and they all danced but shoe and Margaret Duchell for they wer but twa waly dragles'.⁴²⁹ Thus in Barbara Erskine's confession attention is drawn towards Margaret Wallis's participation in witches' meetings and metamorphosis was mentioned. In addition, several witnesses, James Lindsay, Jone Kirk and Andro Thomson, declared on oath on 15 November 1658,

that Margaret Duchall did declare, and did constantly byd be it till the houre of hir death (wha died in prison), that the said Elisabeth Blak was at all meittings with them, at destroying of bairnes, horses and kyne, and that ane night the said Elisabeth Blak came to hir at midningt and took hir out of hir awne house to the crofts of Alloway, quhair the Devill came to them, and as shoe said, rede them both.⁴³⁰

Witches' meetings often contained elements of joy and merriment, seen by Lamer as elements of disorder.⁴³¹ When the alleged witches in Alloa gathered, they 'dancit in otheris hands with the divell p[rese]nt going up and doune among them some of them singing & some of th[e]m

⁴²⁷ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 91.

⁴²⁸ BL, Egerton MS 2879, fo. 3v.

⁴²⁹ BL, Egerton MS 2879, fo. 6r.

⁴³⁰ BL, Egerton MS 2879, fo. 8v.

⁴³¹ Lamer, *Enemies*, 153.

dancing and Bessie paton leading the ring'.⁴³² But there is a sudden change in the confession from a state of innocence to turpitude, which undermines the idyllic aspect. The last point of her confession shows, like several other witchcraft confession, a tendency to escalation based on the dissolving of the language structure. The coherence of the text disappears and the syntax dissolves into fragmented sentence clauses. This also holds true for the semantics, as the meaning gets completely out of control and coherence from one sentence to the next disappears. As part of witches' meetings they kill one person after the other,

sche confest ane meiting in the Cuningar of all the sevine with the divell in the likeness of cattis who went to the gran(ge)? – [*letters obscured*] and destroyed ane kow to Edward turnour, Ane other meitting ane night and they went to Tullibodie & killed ane bairne Anoth[e]r meiting & went to the bow house & killed ane hors & ane kow to willia[m] Menteith an other meitting & they went to Clakmannan and killed ane chyld to thomas bruce, anoth[e]r meiting and they went to Coldones & wes the death of tuo bairnes of his.⁴³³

In my opinion this is a sign of distress, possibly resulting from torture, and an example of how the language in itself may convey knowledge about what happened during witchcraft interrogation. The text in itself is chaotic on all levels, syntactic as well as semantic, and we see an intensifying additive structure in which elements are piled together. All of this contributes to underline the misery. In this respect an argument on linguistic grounds is also an argument on interpretational grounds, trying to uncover the semantic contents of historical sources.

This confession of Margaret Duchill's was cited at the session on 11 May and she denied it all, 'and eftir the dilatiounes wes read to her before the Sessioun sche denyit th[e]m all'.⁴³⁴ This denial was probably fatal to her. After a confession like the one she had delivered, she was trapped. If she confirmed, she would be burnt. If she denied, she would be tortured worse than before. This illustrates the dilemma of the accused person's situation and points to the complex of psychological mechanisms that took effect during a long period in prison. There was no other direction for such a person to look than towards her own death. For many of the accused, this pressure finally led to a confession, knowing well that in doing so they sealed their way to the stake.

4.3.5 Conclusion

The case of Margaret Duchill is typical for the height of the Scottish witch-hunt. Duchill was reputed as a witch. Neighbour disputes related to everyday situations as well as economic

⁴³² NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 91–92.

⁴³³ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 92.

⁴³⁴ NAS, Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6, p. 90.

matters were mentioned by witnesses as motives for suspecting her of witchcraft. Once imprisoned, the chances of acquittal were small. She was tortured and pressed to confess. She was asked leading questions, all stressing demonology. Her confession contains classic demonological elements. Torture led to the disintegration of the language and contents of her confession. She refused to confirm her confession. The minister was there to prepare her before her death. As gravity of guilt was equated to the demonic pact, the outcome of her case was clear at an early stage.

4.4 Jonet Morrison, 1662

4.4.1 General

In *Highland Papers* we find a verbatim transcription of records connected to charges of witchcraft in the parish of Rothesay, Bute, in 1662.⁴³⁵ As the original document is not currently accessible, my analysis is based on this transcription.

The Bute witchcraft paper documents six women who were accused of witchcraft and questioned during the period January-February 1662, part of the nationwide panic. The Bute document as a whole is a web of smaller stories, each focusing on one woman. It is a document, most likely addressed to members of the privy council in order for them to appoint a commission for trying the accused women.⁴³⁶

Jonet Morrison was the first of the six women questioned. Her questioning took place from 15 January until 29 January 1662, eight times altogether and on four of these occasions both in the morning and in the afternoon. Apparently she was first questioned in her home on 15 January, where she gave a declaration. Then she was taken to the tolbooth on 18 January and questioned morning and afternoon. On 19 January she is again said to have been questioned at home, but the place is probably a mistake, because she had already been imprisoned. In connection with her questioning, which always took place before a group of men, the minister, John Stewart, is mentioned seven times; once he is the sole questioner. Twice it is recorded that she herself sent for the minister 'to speik with her'.⁴³⁷ The provost of Rothesay, John Glass, questioned her six times. The other persons mentioned as participating in the questioning were several burgesses of Rothesay and the bailiff. On 21 January Jonet

⁴³⁵ MacPhail, J. R. N. (ed.), 'Papers related to Witchcraft 1662-1677', *HP*, iii, SHS, 2nd series, 3 (1920), 2-30. The document was placed at the disposal of the Scottish History Society by His Grace the Duke of Argyll.

⁴³⁶ Goodare, 'Framework for Scottish Witch-Hunting', 240-1; Wasser, M., 'The privy council and the witches: the curtailment of witchcraft prosecutions in Scotland, 1597-1628', *SHR*, 82 (2003), 22.

⁴³⁷ *HP*, iii, 20.

Morrison gave a declaration before eleven men, on 22 January she sent for the minister and was questioned both morning and afternoon, on 23 January she was questioned twice, before the minister and the provost, and on 29 January she was questioned by the minister.

4.4.2 The voice of the scribe

This document is a third-person narrative. The scribe's voice in the Bute document has a register of different accents; one of these is the accent of a clerk, briefly reporting dates, names and places, a second is the short but pointed rendering of the witnesses' declarations, a third is the slightly coloured accent when rendering the women's confessions, including short portrayals of the women's states of emotion during the confessions, a fourth is the accent of the scribe as the person handling a case in progress. The last accent establishes a textual meta-level in which he is communicating with himself as in a notebook.

The scribe gives precise information about the names of the witnesses and their family relations. Details concerning the time aspect are taken care of, telling how long has passed since an event happened. This holds true for both the witnesses' declarations and the declarations of the accused, for instance 'about twa years sine',⁴³⁸ 'about a fortnight afore halountayd last', 'about three nights before Hallowday last',⁴³⁹ 'one frayday thereafter being the liventh of January 1662',⁴⁴⁰ or 'in summer last being gathering herbs'.⁴⁴¹ Place is also taken care of by mentioning place names, for instance: 'Shee declared that on a tyme heirefter being cuming from Kilmorie in the evening'.⁴⁴² In fact, the document contains several textual elements that are found in orally transmitted narratives.

Sometimes the scribe inserted explanatory comments within brackets, like: 'Shee declared (*after being challenged at the Session*)' and 'she declared *over againe*'. [*My italics.*] Thus he commented on Jonet Morrison's situation, giving information extra to her declaration, telling the reader what had gone before her declaration or that this was yet another declaration in a long series. The use of 'etc.' is also an interesting comment from the writer, 'quairin she promised to be his servant *etc.*'⁴⁴³ [*My italics.*] My interpretation of 'etc.' here is that the scribe, and also, as he assumes, the reader of the document, knows well enough what does come after 'his servant', namely the implied services the woman was supposed to render to

⁴³⁸ HP, iii, 3.

⁴³⁹ HP, iii, 24.

⁴⁴⁰ HP, iii, 21.

⁴⁴¹ HP, iii, 22.

⁴⁴² HP, iii, 21.

⁴⁴³ HP, iii, 22.

the Devil as part of the pact. In other words, there is a more or less fixed formula that the accused persons repeat when they give their declarations, a sign that the elements and content of the declarations the accused are supposed to deliver when questioned are well-known among ordinary people and it is therefore unnecessary to write more. It might also have been used because the document was written to the privy council in order for them to decide if they were going to appoint a commission, and the members were supposed to know a formulaic confession. The Bute document might also have been written for the commission to read before the trial started, so that they would know what had emerged during the previous questioning. This is a tricky point, however, because it is likely that at least some of the interrogators wanted to be commissioners in due time, and these persons would certainly know the content of the document very well.

For the Bute document as a whole, the aspect of ethnicity comes to the fore. Bute is situated in the Highlands, and people in this area spoke Gaelic. In the Bute document, the scribe chose to render some phrases of the charms in Gaelic, quotations from the confessions of the accused women. Even if these quotations are not directly related to Jonet Morison, they add some interesting perspectives on the Highlanders as a group on the part of the scribe. The quotations in Gaelic might have been used to underline the obscurity of the text, denoting that the business of healers and charmers – such as the accused women allegedly were – was dangerous and mystical, and so was their language. There might also have been an assumption that the power of the words would be stronger when uttered in Gaelic. By rendering some oral expressions in Gaelic, the Highlanders are in a way established as ‘the others’ in the text, compared to the rest of the Scots.

I will argue on linguistic grounds that the accused persons gave their confessions in Gaelic, simply because this was the language spoken in that area.⁴⁴⁴ In a contemporary geographical context Bute was mentioned as belonging to the Highlands, because it was said about one of the imprisoned women that she escaped from the tolbooth of Rothesay and fled to the Lowlands.⁴⁴⁵ In addition there was the minister sent for by Morrison herself. He had a thorough knowledge of Gaelic, because he had translated the scriptures into Gaelic.⁴⁴⁶ It is likely that she sent for him because he was able to understand her. She had ‘sent for Mr John

⁴⁴⁴ Withers, C. W. J., ‘Gaelic in Scotland before 1609’ in *Gaelic in Scotland 1698–1981. The geographical History of a Language* (Edinburgh, 1984), 16–41; Withers, C. W. J., *Gaelic Scotland. The Transformation of a Culture Region* (London, 1988), 34–7; P. McNeill, P. and R. Nicholson (ed.), *An Historical Atlas of Scotland c.400–c.1600* (St. Andrews, 1975), 178.

⁴⁴⁵ J. Cameron and J. Imrie (eds.), *The Justiciary Records of Argyll and the Isles 1664–1705*, 2 vols. (SS, 1949–69), 1, 20.

⁴⁴⁶ Fasti, biography John Stewart.

Stewart to speik with her at her own house the 19 January 1662 before John Glas proveist of Rothesay, Mr John Stewart minister there and Johne Gray burgess in the said Burgh'.⁴⁴⁷ We have then three persons meeting her, 'and *being enqueired be us* if she knew (...)'.⁴⁴⁸ [*My italics.*] The use of 'us' here indicates that one of the questioners was the scribe. This fact points to John Stewart, who was able to question her in Gaelic and simultaneously could record in Scots. It should also be noted that Morrison's name of the Devil, 'Klarenough', is an English phrase, which may suggest that she deliberately used English in contrast to Gaelic to emphasise certain aspects of her confession.

The questioning of a person suspected of witchcraft often lasted for several days, thus increasing the accused's exhaustion. In the Bute document, we see that the writer forms a kind of compressed expression of what had happened earlier, when he states: 'Quhilk day she repeitted severall particulars of her former declarations viz. her meiting with the devil severall tymes and her trysting with him, her covenant with him (...)'.⁴⁴⁹ The use of an abbreviation like 'viz.' shows that the writer had authority enough on his own behalf to make a short summary of the main points in Jonet Morrison's declaration thus far, focusing on her meetings with the Devil and the demonic pact.

A more formal sign on the part of the scribe is the use of numbers in front of each paragraph in Jonet Morrison's confession. This might indicate that the accused were supposed to answer certain leading questions in order to obtain a full confession. Use of numbered catalogues is for instance known from witchcraft persecutions in Germany.⁴⁵⁰ The numbers might indicate itemising. Many Scottish dittays have 'Imprimis' or 'Item' to indicate a new point, not numbers – but serving a similar function.

4.4.3 The voices of the witnesses

Those who witnessed against Jonet Morrison were two neighbours. The first time Morrison is mentioned is in a declaration given by her neighbour Robert Stewart. His declaration is the story of a quarrel between his wife and Jonet Morrison, told with the comments of Stewart's wife rendered in indirect discourse and Jonet Morrison's comments in direct discourse. They are vividly portrayed, like actors on the stage, thus showing the oral brilliance of a good storyteller, who knows how to put small dramatic episodes into his story. Apparently the two

⁴⁴⁷ HP, iii, 20.

⁴⁴⁸ HP, iii, 20

⁴⁴⁹ HP, iii, 23.

⁴⁵⁰ Behringer 1995; Voltmer 2001.

women used strong and spicy words. Jonet exclaimed when she did not get what she deserved from the other woman: 'I garne to have it and I will garr yow rue it or it be longer'.⁴⁵¹ The accusation against Morrison was made by Robert Stewart on behalf of his wife. Stewart said that his wife 'was going in the byre felt something strik her there, the whole house darkened which continued a long space with her'.⁴⁵² Stewart's wife had afterwards complained that Jonet Morrison was to blame for this. Apparently, despite such a vague accusation, this seems to have been enough to initiate the case and imprison Morrison. There are no signals that imply that the scribe doubted Stewart's declaration. When Robert Stewart refers to what his wife said, 'she still complains that', his statement loses authority. He was not a witness himself; under ordinary legal prosecution this tends to weaken and diminish the range of the declaration. Still, apparently such an accusation was considered to be sufficient for further inquiry. It is worth noting that a woman's testimony was not usually accepted in criminal trials, but after 1591 an exception was made for witchcraft.⁴⁵³ Ministers were used to interrogating women in the kirk sessions.

The basic structures of a narrative are revealed in Robert Stewart's short statement, including the sequence of events; one event is placed after another on a linear time-line. Stewart starts his declaration in this way: 'Declares that about *twa years sine* (...) *Quhen* his wife said to her (...) the said Jonet said (...) and *within a quarter of ane yeir ther after* the said Glens wife *as she was going in the byre* felt something strik her there (...) she *still* compleins that it was Jonet Morison that did it'.⁴⁵⁴ [*My italics.*] The expressions 'the said Jonet' and 'the said Glens wife' refer to the same person, Jonet Morrison. It seems to have been important for Stewart to strengthen the order of events, and at the same time important for the scribe to have this written down. The correspondence between the order of events as they are placed in the story and the chronological order of the same events also points to another dimension of Stewart's narrative, namely that there is a cause-effect connection between the events, imposed after the sickness of Glen's wife commenced. First the two women quarrelled, then as a consequence something struck Glen's wife. The end of Stewart's declaration, that his wife is still accusing Morrison of this, is nothing more than an assertion. Nothing is proved, but certainly Stewart appears to have thought that emphasizing the connection between the events strengthened his wife's accusation. The more the basic narrative structures come to the fore in the manner of telling, the more obvious it is that the

⁴⁵¹ Means: I am going to have it or I will make you regret it.

⁴⁵² HP, iii, 3.

⁴⁵³ Wasser, 'Privy council and the witches', 42; Goodare, 'Witch-hunting and the Scottish state', 130.

⁴⁵⁴ HP, iii, 3.

content of what is told seems to be the opinion of both witness and writer. An interpretation might be that the special type of logic that may be read into Stewart's story points to the conclusion that Jonet Morrison is guilty of what she is accused.

Even more surprising is the other accusation, a declaration by Nans (Agnes) Mitchell. She neither met Morrison nor quarrelled with her, she just saw her in a dream, and shortly afterwards her child fell ill and died. A dream is a product of the imagination and refers to what is happening in the minds of persons. When dreams or other states of consciousness are rendered in fiction, it is a literary device used intentionally to express the character's state of mind, a subject treated thoroughly by Dorrit Cohn.⁴⁵⁵ The same stylistic device is used here in a legal context to support an accusation. In addition, we see here how narrative structures like linearity, sequential ordering of events and cause-effect relations create the textual glue of Mitchell's declaration, how adverbial phrases are used to specify certain events and deictic expressions – words pointing backwards in the text – are frequently used, often pronouns referring to persons. These stylistic devices structure the text in a recognizable way, thereby increasing the reliability of the statement:

Nan. Mitchell declares that *about two years syne* she took a dreaming of Jonet Morisone *in her bed in the night*, and was afrightened *therewith*, and *within half ane hour after wakning*, her young child took a trembling a very unnaturall lyke disease *quhair* of he died and Jonet Morisone being desired to heal *the said child* said it was *twice shot* and could not be healed ⁴⁵⁶ [*My italics.*]

Both the above-mentioned declarations have to do with malefice; the sickness of an adult and the death of a child as a result of alleged sorcery. Mention of the child being 'twice shot' might refer to elf-shot or fairy arrows or elf arrows. Traditionally, elf-shot has been understood as prehistoric arrowheads believed to have been made by the fairies or elves to harm livestock.⁴⁵⁷ This definition has been used to categorize the phenomenon when mentioned in witchcraft cases in the SSW, resulting in numerous findings. We find the same understanding of elf-shot in John Gregorson Campbell's book *The Gaelic Otherworld*.⁴⁵⁸ Alaric Hall warns against over-stating the significance of elf-shot traditions in early modern Scotland. He argues that two systems for aetiology of illness – fairies and witches – must have co-existed for centuries and did so throughout the period of witchcraft trials.⁴⁵⁹ With regard to the Bute document it is important to bear in mind that the words 'shot' and 'elf

⁴⁵⁵ Cohn, *Transparent Minds*.

⁴⁵⁶ *HP*, iii, 3.

⁴⁵⁷ Miller, *Magic and Witchcraft*, 58.

⁴⁵⁸ Originally published 1900–1902, new edition 2005, edited with commentaries by Ronald Black.

⁴⁵⁹ Hall, *Meaning of Elf*, 33.

errow stone' have to be interpreted in the traditional meaning of the words, because the connection between 'elf', 'stone' and 'errow' is indisputable in the context. It should also be noted that the Devil enters the stage, making the whole picture more complex. Morrison claimed that a child had been shot. Her confession did not mention fairies, but contained a reference to the case of Margrat NcWilliam, one of the other questioned women, who mentioned an 'elf errow stone'. She got the stone from the Devil, and she used it to kill her own son because she was in poverty and looked forward to a reward from the Devil. So what we have in the Bute document is a notion that the shot is connected to *maleficium* and the Devil, and thus could be part of a demonological confession. In that respect it is correct to say that a magic object originally related to fairy-belief during the historical witchcraft persecutions was incorporated into demonological ideas.

In addition, the document shows that it was common to 'shoot' a new person in order to free a person shot before, as it was suggested by the Devil that Jonet Morrison should shoot Niniane Ker baylie and put him in Adam Ker's stead in order to bring home Adam Ker. She was even asked by the Devil 'to tak the lyfe of John Glas proveists dun [*dull brown*] horse by shooting him and put him for William Stephen who was lying sick sore payned',⁴⁶⁰ but she refused to do this. The Devil also told her that he intended 'to tak John Glas his barne'.⁴⁶¹ She also refused 'to tak Walter Stewart, bayly, his lyfe by shooteing him to put him for ane neighbour of his that dwelt in the highlands'.⁴⁶² This shows the belief that it was possible to 'shoot' a person and replace him with another person. As can be seen, the intended victims of these desired shootings were mostly officials, bailies and the provost, while those who stood to gain their life and health were poor people and common people. So a social perspective is certainly present in Jonet Morrison's evil-doings.

Both accusations against Morrison seem to have been loosely founded. What becomes clear is the fear and anxiety ruling this community, making it natural for people to draw connections between mischance and certain persons known to be cunning in sorcery. There seems to have been a widespread understanding in this community, where witchcraft and unnatural death were rampant, that sickness as a cause of death simply was not accepted as real, and witchcraft was regarded as both culprit and solution.

⁴⁶⁰ HP, iii, 23.

⁴⁶¹ HP, iii, 23.

⁴⁶² HP, iii, 23.

4.4.4 The voice of the accused person

A world of fantastic and realistic elements mingled together is conveyed to the reader in Morrison's confession, so rich in details and colour that it exceeds any modern fantasy book. There are no signs of scepticism in the text, no distancing devices used by the scribe when Jonet Morrison's declarations and confessions are rendered.

Normand and Roberts argue that by 1590 'any relationship between human and spirit, whether fairy or elf, could be seen only as evil'.⁴⁶³ They claim that there is a great difference between 1576, the Bessie Dunlop trial, and 1590, the first North Berwick trials, due to fifteen years of theological indoctrination by protestant ministers and the experience of other trials: 'By 1590 interrogators, and perhaps uneducated people too, were familiar with the rudiments of protestant demonology. When the accused were questioned they had some idea of what was being asked of them'.⁴⁶⁴ In the case of Morrison, this argument holds true. When elf-shot is mentioned in her confession, it is used for harming. The relationship between her and the elves has evil-doing as its consequences. It is clear that fairy belief only became dangerous when the fairies were related to evil and in that way could be connected to demonological ideas. Therefore, in my view, demonological ideas were the real danger, whether or not it was woven into other types of folk belief.

Morrison's confession contains elements of demonology as well as folk belief. A dead man called Adam Ker is mentioned several times in her declaration. Apparently he was killed by means of sorcery and figures as a spirit who can be brought back to life, which is what Jonet Morrison wants. One evening she meets 'a black rough fierce man who cam to her and desired her till go with him' and in return he promised her to 'give the a Kayre'⁴⁶⁵ and make the a Lady'.⁴⁶⁶ She agreed to meet the man and he repeated his promise, 'I'll make the a Lady and put the in a brave castall quhair thou shalt want nothing and I will free the of all the poverties and troubles thou art in and learn the a way how to bring home Adam Ker'.⁴⁶⁷ The second time she met with the Devil, she made a covenant with him, in which he promised to give her anything she desired and to teach her how to bring home Adam Ker, 'quhairin she promised to be his servant etc'.⁴⁶⁸ This is a narrative of temptation, which follows the pattern of most demonic pact confessions. First the woman is reluctant to enter the pact, but after a while she is persuaded, especially when wealth is in sight.

⁴⁶³ L. Normand and G. Roberts (eds.), *Witchcraft in early Modern Scotland* (Exeter, 2000), 80.

⁴⁶⁴ Normand and Roberts, *Witchcraft*, 80–1.

⁴⁶⁵ Cart, a wagon pulled by horses, Mr R. Black, e-mail 11.03.2006.

⁴⁶⁶ *HP*, iii, 20.

⁴⁶⁷ *HP*, iii, 21.

⁴⁶⁸ *HP*, iii, 22.

On a direct question, 'if she knew what man he was', she answered that 'she knew him to be the divill and at the first she grew eery'.⁴⁶⁹ The name 'Klarenough' and the appearance of the Devil are noted in the records, and were probably seen as important. The Devil is portrayed as 'a black rough fierce man', 'a mane naked with a great black head'. The somewhat special name of the Devil reflects a double meaning, even somewhat humorous, because the Devil might have answered that it was clear enough who he was, and then she took this as his name. Use of humour is an aspect known from traditional tales about the Devil and it gives a somewhat strange stylistic flavour to the text. At her first meetings with the Devil, he was alone, but once she met him together with 'a great number of men that she asked at him quhat were these that went by who answered they are my company and quhen she speared where they were going he answered that they were going to seek a prey'.⁴⁷⁰ An image like this is frightening, a signal that people felt haunted and followed by evil spirits, witches and others, roaming about, and that they all might be the next casual victim. What is portrayed seems to be the Wild Hunt or Furious Horde, discussed above. Goodare says that essential components of this are found in Scottish cases, even if no case records such a hunt in full.⁴⁷¹

Elements of Christianity are found in Morrison's declaration. After she had made the covenant, she was baptized by the Devil. Her new baptism, which is a well-known element from other witchcraft confessions, is clearly a mockery of religious baptism: 'he asked quhat was her name and she answered Jonet Morisoun, the name that God gave me, and he said believe not in Christ bot believe in me. I baptize the Margarat'.⁴⁷²

Morrison had a reputation as a healer and was used by people in the community to heal sick persons. She is mentioned several times in the Rothesay Kirk Session Book, as will be seen below,⁴⁷³ in connection with healing as well as when the term 'witch' is directly connected to her. It seems to have been a short step between having a reputation as a healer and having a reputation as a witch. Those who were mentioned several times in the kirk sessions in connection with healing might easily come into focus as a suspected witch. It seems clear that people sought Morrison to cure diseases and mental illness. Therefore she was vulnerable to accusations of witchcraft.

⁴⁶⁹ Means affected by fear or dread. Mr Ronald Black, e-mail 11.03.2006.

⁴⁷⁰ *HP*, iii, 23.

⁴⁷¹ Goodare, 'Scottish Witchcraft in its European Context', 32.

⁴⁷² *HP*, iii, 22.

⁴⁷³ NAS, Rothesay Kirk Session Book, CH2/890/1, pp. 80, 100, 102.

The 'interaction between individual and communal suspicion', which is treated in detail in Briggs's study, may be exemplified in the case of Morrison.⁴⁷⁴ She is mentioned in April 1660 in the Rothesay Kirk Session Book in connection with treating a young girl, who after being sick of the pox, could neither speak nor see. Morrison, being wanted by the girl's father, 'came to her house and bound up her head and gave her a piece salvets rub to her breast'.⁴⁷⁵ This means that people came to her to ask for cures for sick people. She also made use of various remedies, probably some herbal medicines, to cure the sick. At the next session, Morrison declared that she did nothing more than bind up the girl's head, and she was supported by two witnesses' testimonies.

Morrison was mentioned again in May 1661, this time suspected of charming. She turns up at the kirk session, 'being challenged for certain speeches whilk she spoke to Elspeth Spence anent the said Elspeth her daughter that was lying sick'.⁴⁷⁶ Even if Morrison denied it, it seems clear that she was fetched to cure sick people. At the next session, 6 June, she was warned after two people witnessed against her: 'the session did discharge the said Jonet Morisone in time coming to use the giving of any Physick or herbs to any body under the certification that she shall be esteemed a witch if she do so'.⁴⁷⁷ This is the first time 'witch' is used about her, and we are now only seven months before a more serious prosecution of her begins.

The element of healing is recorded in the Bute document as part of Morrison's confession: 'She declared that in Summer last being gathering hearbs to heall Patrick Glas daughter who was laying seick of a very unnatural disease'.⁴⁷⁸ She was later asked 'anent her heiling of Mcfersoun in Keretoule his dochter who lay sick of a very unnaturall disease without power of hand or foot both speechless and kenured [?]'⁴⁷⁹ A question mark is written in the transcribed document behind the word 'kenured', stating that the scribe did not know the meaning or was unsure of the meaning. The meaning of this word is not known today either.⁴⁸⁰ In addition to the healing noted, another healing performed by Morrison is mentioned, 'her heiling of Alester Bannatyne who was sick of the lyk disease answred that he was blasted with the fairyes and that she heiled him thereof with herbs'.⁴⁸¹ There might have

⁴⁷⁴ Briggs, *Witches and Neighbours*, 138.

⁴⁷⁵ NAS, Rothesay Kirk Session Book, CH2/890/1/80.

⁴⁷⁶ NAS, Rothesay Kirk Session Book, CH2/890/1/100.

⁴⁷⁷ NAS, Rothesay Kirk Session Book, CH2/890/1/102.

⁴⁷⁸ *HP*, iii, 22.

⁴⁷⁹ *HP*, iii, 22.

⁴⁸⁰ It has not been possible for me to find any certain interpretation of this word by consulting dictionaries and experts, but it is likely that it refers to one of the senses, as it is juxtaposed with 'speechless'.

⁴⁸¹ *HP*, iii, 22.

been a connection between the poke and the blast.⁴⁸² The use of herbal healing seems to have been combined with the use of charms, a well-known combination in traditional healing practice. As for the herbs that were used, they 'seem to have been quite typical of herbal medicine in general'.⁴⁸³

Among the questioners there is an interest in blasting and shooting. It seems that the interrogators' understanding of 'shooting' in the Bute document was a type of shooting that was intentionally harmful and could cause death. In addition, blasting as well as arrow stone are clearly connected to elves and fairies in the documents' formulations. This seems to strengthen the assumption that magic objects like elf arrow stones were originally associated with fairies among the peasants. But there also seems to have been an idea that these remedies had been and still were used in connection with *maleficium*. Whether the fairies had been contacted for healing operations, remains unknown. In one of her declarations Morrison said that 'John Glas his bairne quhilk he hade in fostering was shot at the window'.⁴⁸⁴ As for blasting contrasted to shooting, Jonet Morrison 'again being inquired' what was the difference, she answered for the shooting that 'quhen they are shott ther is no recoverie for it and if the shott be in the heart they died presently bot if it be not at the heart they will die in a while with it yet will at last die with it'.⁴⁸⁵ Blasting, she explains, 'is a whirlwinde that the fairies raises about that persone quhich they intend to wrong and that tho ther were tuentie present yet it will harme none bot him quhom they were set for'.⁴⁸⁶ Blasting can be healed either by herbs or by charming. It seems clear that it was important for the questioners to obtain knowledge they did not possess, and the inquiry about blasting and shooting was undoubtedly seriously meant. Apparently Morrison was asked this question several times, as an opportunity for outsiders to learn the secrets of a knowledgeable person.

Denunciation of other witches seems to have been one of the questions on the witch-hunters' agenda. One way for the witch-hunters to get additional names on their list was to ask the accused about participation in witches' meetings. This was also the case with Morrison. First she said that she had seen 'the devil and a company with him comeing downe the hill side underneath Brod chepell'.⁴⁸⁷ In this instance she mentioned eight people who were in company with the Devil, declaring that all these were witches.

⁴⁸² E-mail Mr Ronald Black, 11.03.2006. Cf. *The Gaelic Otherworld*, p. xl.

⁴⁸³ Miller, *Magic and Witchcraft*, 29.

⁴⁸⁴ *HP*, iii, 28.

⁴⁸⁵ *HP*, iii, 27.

⁴⁸⁶ *HP*, iii, 27; Black, *Gaelic Otherworld*, p. xl; Mr R. Black, e-mail 11.03.2006.

⁴⁸⁷ *HP*, iii, 24.

The other way for witch-hunters to get names of new suspects was to press forth names of persons practicing witchcraft. Morrison related in detail how persons had performed *maleficium* leading to the death of William Stephen, Adam Kerr and Alester McNiven. In addition they took the lives of cows, threw spells on horses and took the milk of cows. Their method was mostly a pock of 'witchrie', which they put somewhere inside or outside the house or in the barn. This 'poke' or 'wee bag' was a little four-cornered bag packed with diverse exterminating diseases in the familiar likenesses of hair, grease, nail parings, shoe-tackets, salt and powder.⁴⁸⁸ Probably these small bags existed, so that a witchcraft object was a reality. The people mentioned by Morrison were (among others) McLevin, Margaret NcWilliam, and two daughters of Margaret NcWilliam, Katharine and Elspeth. An interesting account is given of how they took Adam Kerr's life by using harmful sorcery, and Margrat NcWilliam fled from the place so that she should not be suspected. Before this, they had taken the power 'of his side from him by making two onsets [*attacks*] on him for he was a man little worth and he hade little ill in him so he had also little good that therfor they got overtane of him'.⁴⁸⁹ This sentence might imply that attacks with elf-shot were effective on people who were either very good or very bad, but not so effective on people of 'little worth' one way or the other.⁴⁹⁰ A more straightforward reading would be that they could harm him because he had 'little good', meaning that his faith was not strong enough. Questions about the pock of witchcraft seemed to be important. For instance, Morrison said that 'Nclevin did put a pock of Witchcraft in the east roof of Finley Mcconochie in Ballicailes stable above the horse on the north side of the house'.

There was often a tight web of denunciations during a witchcraft panic. Jonet Morrison referred to a remark made by Jonet NcNicoll, 'that day quhich she was challenged at the Sessione, that Jenet NcNicoll came to her in Patrick Rowans house and said Jenat, Look that the fyle none bot yourself'.⁴⁹¹ How closely sorcery seems to have had a root in the daily disagreements of life, from the point of view of the accused herself, we may see from the following example. Morrison declared that NcWilliam and her daughters took Alester McNiven's life by using witchcraft: 'the quarrel was that because he craved sorely some malt silver that Katrine Moore [*one of NcWilliam's daughters*] was owing him'.⁴⁹² Getting hold of Morrison's knowledge of sorcery and getting hold of her knowledge of the network of

⁴⁸⁸ Stewart, W. G., *Popular Superstitions and Festive Amusements of the Highlanders* (Edinburgh, 1970), 202.

⁴⁸⁹ *HP*, iii, 25.

⁴⁹⁰ Mr Ronald Black, e-mail 11.03.2006.

⁴⁹¹ *HP*, iii, 27.

⁴⁹² *HP*, iii, 25.

operating witches are two major themes during her questioning. To the very end of the questioning, the task of getting additional names of suspicious persons written down was continued, as we can see from the short notes finishing her hearing.

4.4.5 The final fate

The Bute questioning had consequences, as expected. A commission was appointed by the privy council on 7 May 1662 for four of the women mentioned in the Bute paper on witchcraft, among them Jonet Morrison.⁴⁹³ The Bute document does not contain any records from the trial, which must have taken place after the commission's arrival in Bute. There is no information about the final fate of the accused women in the Bute document. But a later source throws light on their destiny, namely the Justiciary Records of Argyll and the Isles.⁴⁹⁴ It states that one of the women mentioned in the Bute document, but not in the commission, Jonet McNicoll, was tried later, in 1673. She managed to flee to Kilmarnock in 1662:

she being apprehended anno 1662 foresaid and imprisoned within the tolbuith of Rothesay and *fearing to be putt to death with the rest who suffered at that time*, It is true and of veritie that she brake ward and escaped out of the said tolbuith and fled to the Lowlands quher she remained in Kilmernock and other places ther about these twelf yeers'.⁴⁹⁵ [*My italics.*]

Thus she escaped the trial, but was rearrested in 1673, tried in a local trial and executed. However, 'the rest who suffered at that time' must refer to the other women mentioned in the Bute document. The final fate of Jonet Morrison was execution.

4.4.6 Conclusion

A narratological analysis contributes to the understanding of witchcraft in Bute in 1662 in several ways. Because the different voices heard in the document are allowed to speak separately, information given by the scribe and information given by the accused individuals and the witnesses may be kept separate. The narrator's voice brings to the fore an instability in the text. This instability is created most of all out of the tension between the scribe's wish to order the text and the magical content of the confessions. It is possible to trace a specific accent of the scribe's voice through evaluating judgements, emotive words and particularly coloured ways of portraying individuals. In particular, the scribe's voice might have been biased when it came to rendering the accused persons' discourse. He describes a woman

⁴⁹³ RPC, 208.

⁴⁹⁴ J. Cameron and J. Imrie (eds.), *Justiciary Records of Argyll and the Isles* (SS, 1949), 1.

⁴⁹⁵ J. Cameron and J. Imrie (eds.), *Justiciary Records*, 1, 20.

respected on the one hand for her skills in healing, but on the other hand considered as a threatening individual due to the same skills.

The scribe's voice also gives accurate information of great value for searching other sources. As for factual information he functions as a neutral recorder, who leads the researcher to other historical documents illuminating the case.

4.5 Bessie Weir, Annabell and John Stewart, 1677

4.5.1 General

The last witchcraft trials from mainland Scotland to be studied in detail are from Paisley, in 1677.⁴⁹⁶ I have chosen to focus on the voice of the law because it displays legal attitudes in a late phase of the witch-hunt.

In January and February 1677 a group of five women and one man in Paisley were charged with an attempt to murder the landlord Sir George Maxwell of Pollock. They were accused of having cast an illness on him by roasting his wax image.⁴⁹⁷ The trials were mixed central-local, that is, local trials with central representatives. The accused in the alleged plot against the landlord were Jonet Mathie, Annabell Stewart, John Stewart, Bessie Weir, Marjorie Craige and Margaret Jackson. They were all 'apprehendit and imprisoned as suspect guiltie of witchcraft by entering unto paction with the divill Renouncing ther baptisme and committing severall malefices'.⁴⁹⁸ The commission appointed by the privy council to put them to trial stated explicitly, 'if they shall be found guiltie upon voluntar Confession without any sort of torture or indirect meanes used ag[ains]t them to bring them to ane confession or that malefices are otherwayes legallie instructed and proven'.⁴⁹⁹ When it was found necessary to underline that torture should not be used, it suggests that torture frequently was used, and – as we shall see – it was used in this case.

Jonet Mathie was the 50-year-old mother of Annabell Stewart and John Stewart. She was the wife of an under miller and of middling socio-economic status. Annabell Stewart was 14 years old. John Stewart was 16 and lived in a house of his own. He must have been regarded as self sufficient because he lived in a house of his own. Margaret Jackson had been widowed for 20 years. She was in-law to three other persons accused in the group. Marjorie

⁴⁹⁶ I would like to thank Diane Baptie for the transcription of the document.

⁴⁹⁷ These cases have been dealt with by Sinclair in *Satans Invisible World Discovered* and by R.L. Harris in 'Janet Douglas and the Witches of Pollock' in S. R. McKenna (ed.), *Selected Essays in Scottish Language and Literature* (Lewington, 1992), 97–124.

⁴⁹⁸ NAS, Circuit Court Books, JC10/4, fo. 1r.

⁴⁹⁹ NAS, Circuit Court Books, JC10/4, fo. 1r.

Craige was Irish and had a son in Ireland. She had been married in Ireland and was separated from her husband. Bessie Weir was married in Paisley, the wife of John Patton, weaver. She escaped from prison and fled to the parish of Carmanack⁵⁰⁰ where she pretended to be Bessie Aikin, married to a man named Chrystie in Glasgow. Bessie Weir was supposed to be the 'officer' to the meetings, according to confessions by Annabell Stewart and Jonet Mathie.

Seven witnesses gave their testimonies, two of whom were servitors to the Laird of Pollock and one servitor to John Maxwell younger of Pollock. The finding of some images of wax and clay, representing Sir George Maxwell of Pollock, seems to have been important to prove through the testimonies of the witnesses. One wax image was found in Janet Mathie's house, 'in a litle holl of the wall at the back of the fyre'.⁵⁰¹ Another witness, Lodovick Stewart of Auchinhead, went to 'the house of John Stewart warlock in Pollockshawe and ther he found a picture of clay in the (word crossed out) bedstrae of John Stewart depons that ther were three pins in the s[ai]d picture of clay and that ther wes on[e] in each syd and on[e] in the breast'.⁵⁰² The pins were removed, something which had an immediately beneficial effect on Sir George Maxwell's health. The third image, a model of earth, 'wes found in the prison of Paisley under the cod or bolster of Jannet Mathie the pannalls bed'.⁵⁰³ All the witnesses testified that they had either been present at one of the findings of the effigies or that they had seen Sir George Maxwell's sickness increase around the fourteenth or fifteenth of October, when the alleged witches' meeting in John Stewart's house had taken place, and the same sickness decrease around the eleventh or twelfth of December, when the effigies were found and the pins removed.

Torture was used during the trial. One of the witnesses, Robert Kirlie officer in Paisley, testified to a strange happening when Janet Mathie managed to get loose from the stocks, 'being by ordor of the justices putt in the stoks within the prison of Paisley and ther being in a cod distant from the stocks the breadth of the house the deponent found her sitting upon the cod the nixt morning tho no person hade hade access to her all the whill that she hade bein in the stocks befor that time'.⁵⁰⁴ The emphasis here is on the inexplicable, namely Janet Mathie's ability to break physical laws. Thus it appears rather haphazardly in the document. It is good example of the use of torture being 'concealed' in the witchcraft documents, and only coming

⁵⁰⁰ SSW suggests this means Kilmarnock.

⁵⁰¹ NAS, Circuit Court Books, JC10/4, fo. 7r.

⁵⁰² NAS, Circuit Court Books, JC10/4, fo. 7v.

⁵⁰³ NAS, Circuit Court Books, JC10/4, fo. 9v.

⁵⁰⁴ NAS, Circuit Court Books, JC10/4, fo. 9v.

to the fore if one of the witnesses mentions it by accident, as here, or if the accused person withdraws his confession and says it was given due to use of torture.

The alleged meetings at which the effigy of Sir George Maxwell was roasted took place from October 1676 onwards, the last meeting being held on 3 January 1677, as reconstructed by the confessions of the accused. The trial started on 27 January 1677, but the interrogation had started earlier.⁵⁰⁵ The trial continued on 15 February, at which date the verdict and sentence was given. The privy council commission for trying Annabell Stewart and ‘diverse other persons’ was given on 18 January 1677.⁵⁰⁶ The Commission for trying Marjory Craig was given on 1 February 1677.⁵⁰⁷ This means that the last commission was appointed after the trial had started. The date of execution was set for 20 February at Gallow Green, but the execution of Annabell Stewart was delayed.

The trial records contain a mixture of third-person and second-person narration. The accused persons’ confessions and the sworn testimonies of the witnesses were recorded as third-person narratives, while the discourse of the legal officials was recorded as a monologue.

4.5.2 The voice of the law

Mention of the divine as well as the secular law is here similar to the study of Margaret Wallace above. As has been argued by Larner, by the 1670s indictments were ‘purely common form’, as the legal phraseology seems to have been well standardised.⁵⁰⁸

Ye are indyted and accused that wher notwithstanding be the divine Lawe of almightie God sett down in the Sacred word especiallie in the *20 chap: of Leviticus* and *18 chap: of Deutronomie* and be the lawe and practiq[ue] of all nations and be the Lawe & practiq[ue] of this kingdome and namlie be *73 act 9 par: Q M* It is expresslie provydit statut and ordained that an maner of person of whatsomever degree quality or condition they be of presume or take upon hand to practise or use any maner of witchcraft sorcerie or necromancie therthrow to abuse the leidges under the paine of death.⁵⁰⁹ [*My italics.*]

The argumentation in this paragraph is overwhelming and echoes a frequently used legal rhetoric from decades back. When these expressions are used as late as 1677 without any modification, this is a signal that legal witchcraft discourse had become formulaic. This was 60 years before the repeal of the witchcraft statute in Scotland, and the massive arguing with learned references we hear in this document shows no sign of doubt related to the fundamentals of the witch-hunt.⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁵ NAS, Circuit Court Books, JC10/4, fo. 1r.

⁵⁰⁶ *RPC*, 3rd series, v, xxxv-xxxvi, 95, 104–5, 148.

⁵⁰⁷ *RPC*, 3rd series, v, 5, 104.

⁵⁰⁸ Larner, *Enemies*, 130.

⁵⁰⁹ NAS, Circuit Court Books, JC10/4, fo. 1r.

⁵¹⁰ Goodare, J., ‘Introduction’, in J. Goodare (ed.), *The Scottish witch-hunt in context*, 14.

The same 'double' argumentation related to the clerical and secular sphere comes to the fore when the charge against Weir is expressed. In participating in the meeting with the Devil 'ye the fors[ai]ds witches having shacken off all fear of Gods dew reverence & regaird to his divin ordinance & Lawes and to the acts of parlia[men]t of his kingdome and having wickedlie & unjustly conceived a cruell malice ag[ains]t Sir George Maxwell of Pollock'.⁵¹¹ This is an insistent style, in which adjectives and adverbs with the same meaning are heaped up.

The information that Bessie Weir was the 'officer' of the meetings was repeated by several of the accused. In the voice of the law she was addressed as 'ye in the qualitie of the divills officer'.⁵¹² This expression is repeated once more in Bessie Weir's confession. The notion of a man being an officer of a witchcraft group is frequently found in Scotland.⁵¹³ Here a woman has the same function, as is also seen in witchcraft cases in Dunfermline in Fife.⁵¹⁴ This might indicate that a masculine pattern is taken over by women when they confess the organisation of their witchcraft activity.

Neverthelesse it is of veritie that ye the s[ai]d Bessie Weir are guiltie of and hes committed the cryme of witchcraft in suae fare as in harvest i^mvi^c & sevintie six you came to the house of Jannet Mathie in Pollockshawe milne your fellow witch and you with the s[ai]d Jannet did intyse Annabill Stewart her daughter to resigne her self to the divill which she did by putting her on[e] hand to the crown of her head and the other to the sole of her foot⁵¹⁵

In the voice of the law we hear a very detailed rendering of the sorcery that has been performed, based on previous confessions. This suggests that the legal officials in these trials feel a need to being extremely accurate in order to be convincing. We often see in witchcraft documents this urge for accuracy with regard to placing events in a linear sequence and underlining the cause and effect between sorcery actions and their disastrous results. In the paragraph below, a description of Sir George Maxwell's misery in falling sick for the second time, this connection is clear:

And upon the making of the s[ai]d effigies & placing the pins as affores[ai]d the s[ai]d Sir George did relapse into his former sicknes and his paines and torments did greatlie increase And the effigies by the goodnes of almightie God being discovered and found in the bed of the s[ai]d John Stewart within his house in Pollockshawe upon the eighth of January last and the pins taken out of the s[ai]d effigies the s[ai]d Sir George did most sensiblie & remarkablie recover in a great measure his health'.⁵¹⁶ [My italics.]

⁵¹¹ NAS, Circuit Court Books, JC10/4, fo. 6r.

⁵¹² NAS, Circuit Court Books, JC10/4, fo. 6v.

⁵¹³ Goodare, J., 'Men and the witch-hunt in Scotland', in A. Rowlands (ed.), *Witchcraft and Masculinities in Early Modern Europe* (forthcoming).

⁵¹⁴ Macdonald, 'Devil in Fife witchcraft cases' in Goodare, *Scottish witch-hunt in context*, 41.

⁵¹⁵ NAS, Circuit Court Books, JC10/4, fo. 6v.

⁵¹⁶ NAS, Circuit Court Books, JC10/4, fo. 6v.

The argumentation is based on the view that magic works and that a magical object like the effigy really could mean a matter of life and death. The analysis above shows that the legal officials believed that this type of sorcery worked and that the accused had the power to effect this type of witchcraft. Taking into consideration that this was at a late stage of the witch-hunt, it is likely that the discovery of physical objects made the question of guilt more convincing for the judicial authorities.

4.5.3 Conclusion

The case of Bessie Weir, Annabell and John Stewart shows some features typical of a late witchcraft case. The use of forms with open blanks to fill in a set of information shows that by 1677 the legal procedure was common to witchcraft cases. At this stage of the witch-hunt it was even more important than before to have details about the alleged witchcraft to 'prove' that the crime had been committed. Likewise the interest in the wax effigies on the part of the interrogators supports the interpretation that physical objects were considered to be solid proofs of performed witchcraft. Torture was used in this case, as was witch pricking. The argument for postponing Annabell Stewart's sentence was that she had only recently been ensnared by the Devil and therefore was to be considered less hardened than an elderly person. This underlines that when considering whether a person was a witch or not, reputation over time and the length of the person's alleged cohabitation with the Devil were important points for the legal officials to consider. It might be a sign of a late case that the linguistic creativeness may be slightly paler here than in cases some decades earlier.

5 Orkney



Figure 12 Map of Orkney

5.1 General

Compared to mainland Scotland, the reduced number of witchcraft trials in Orkney and Shetland seems to be a conspicuous feature, with 68 and 31 persons accused respectively. However, the number of trials has to be considered in relation to the population of the

northern islands, which for Orkney has been estimated at around 18,700 in the seventeenth century.⁵¹⁷ The population of Shetland has been estimated at 9,750–12,000 in 1600 and 12,000 in 1632.⁵¹⁸ In that respect Orkney suffered from the witch-hunt to a greater extent than the mainland, while witchcraft persecution in Shetland was more lenient.⁵¹⁹ The trials in Orkney and Shetland took on a different character from those in mainland Scotland, as the demonological element did not get the same foothold there. Demonological features are scarce in witchcraft trials, particularly in Shetland, and consequently large-scale panics did not arise. My assumption is that the geographical distance from mainland Scotland tended to weaken the intensity of the witch-hunt.

In this and the following chapter I would like to explore whether Orkney and Shetland had certain characteristics as geographical regions which might have influenced the witch-hunt, features that will best be shown by treating the northern islands as entities on their own. Historically there were tight relations between the northern islands and Norway, as Orkney in 1468 and Shetland in 1469 were transferred from Norway to Scotland.⁵²⁰ During the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries the northern isles were ruled by Robert Stewart (1533–1593), Earl of Orkney, Lord of Shetland, and his son Patrick Stewart, Earl of Orkney, Lord of Shetland (c.1565–1615).⁵²¹ After political tumults in 1614 Patrick Stewart was executed in 1615. This meant the end of the rule of the Stewart earls on the northern islands.⁵²² My discussion will be based on two questions. Firstly, can the continuing influence of Norwegian culture and connections after the transactions of 1468–9, when the kingdom of Scotland reached its final frontiers in the north, be traced? Secondly, could the setting up of new institutions after the downfall of Patrick in 1614 have influenced the witchcraft persecution?

With regard to the first point, continuing Norse influence, this must be related to possible remnants after the transfer of Orkney and Shetland in 1468–9. The most important Norse influence may have been in the legal arena. The acquisition of the earldom by James III in 1470 was followed by a change in jurisdiction from the Archbishop of Nidaros to that of St Andrews.⁵²³ Nevertheless, this change did not abolish Norse laws on Orkney and Shetland. In

⁵¹⁷ Kyd, J. G. (ed.), *Scottish Popular Statistics including Webster's analysis of population 1755* (Edinburgh, 1952), 82. In 1755 the population was 23,382 with 20% reduction. In 1831 the population had increased to 28,047, according to *The New Statistical Account of Scotland*, vol. xv (Edinburgh, 1845), 213.

⁵¹⁸ Withrington, D. J., (ed.), *Shetland and the outside world 1469–1969* (Oxford, 1983), 151.

⁵¹⁹ Mainland Scotland had 0.32% accused in relation to population, Orkney 0.36% accused and Shetland 0.26% accused.

⁵²⁰ Donaldson, G., 'The Scots Settlement in Shetland', in Withrington (ed.), *Shetland and the Outside World*, 8.

⁵²¹ The date of Patrick Stewart's birth is not known, as the records of his infancy are inaccurate. P. D. Anderson suggests that he was born in 1565, *Black Patie* (Edinburgh, 1992), 149.

⁵²² Anderson, *Black Patie*, 139.

⁵²³ Thomson, W. P. L., *History of Orkney* (Edinburgh, 1987), 125.

fact, Norse laws were in use on the northern islands for several centuries after this year, officially authorised by a decision of Parliament from 1567 stating that the islands ought to be subject to their own law.⁵²⁴ This decision of Parliament – stating that the northern islands were exempt from Scottish law – made itself felt during the two generations of Stewart earls, who more or less took the law into their own hands. This is seen in one of the treason charges against Patrick in 1610; that he had caused a number of people to be tried before ‘pretended deputes and judges’.⁵²⁵ Thus the northern islands were legally self-contained. Not until 1611 were the old Norse laws abolished by an act of the Scottish privy council and superseded by the laws of Scotland.⁵²⁶ Parliament’s decision of 1567 was reversed: all ‘foreign laws’ in Orkney and Shetland were abolished, and magistrates were ordered to use the ‘proper laws of the kingdom’.⁵²⁷

This was partly due to King James’s re-introduction of episcopacy and the restoration of the bishops, a process which lasted from 1606 till 1610, when the consecrated episcopate was restored. James Law was appointed bishop to Orkney, and he came to play an important part within the church as well as in the laws of the northern islands. In 1612 Orkney was permanently annexed to the crown, with the exception of the kirk estates.⁵²⁸ In 1614 the widely scattered kirk estates were acquired by the king. As compensation, the bishop was granted a more compact and united territory by crown charter.⁵²⁹ After the excambion of 1614 the bishopric territory comprised, in the main, the Orkney parishes of Sandwick, Stromness, Orphir, St Ola, Holm, Shapinsay, Hoy and Walls. In these areas Bishop Law assumed the function of sheriff, by virtue of his charter.⁵³⁰ The rest of Orkney, with the whole of Shetland, constituted the principal sheriffdom, with Sir James Stewart of Killeith acting as sheriff.⁵³¹

We find the oldest known Norwegian prohibition of witchcraft in the *Landskapslovene* [ancient regional laws].⁵³² In a section on witchcraft, ‘On Divination and Magic Chants’,⁵³³ in the *Gulathing Law* [a written code of customary law], Christianity challenges heathendom for the first time in Norwegian legislation. This law decreed that a man convicted of having practised soothsaying or of having told fortunes ‘shall be an outlaw and shorn of all personal

⁵²⁴ Thomson, *History*, 174.

⁵²⁵ Thomson, *History*, 173.

⁵²⁶ *RPC*, 3rd series, ix, 181.

⁵²⁷ Thomson, *History*, 173–4.

⁵²⁸ *APS*, iv, 481, c.15.

⁵²⁹ *RMS*, 1609–20, 1119.

⁵³⁰ *RMS*, 1609–20, 119. The Court Book of the Bishopric relates to proceedings within this territory.

⁵³¹ The Court Books of Orkney and Shetland record proceedings from these regions.

⁵³² These laws were written down in the eleventh century, the section on sorcery rewritten in the middle of the twelfth century.

⁵³³ In Norwegian ‘Um spådomar og galdresongar’.

rights; and all his chattels to the last penny shall go one half to the king and one half to the bishop'.⁵³⁴ However, he could refute the charge by taking a sixfold oath: 'In the Court Book of Shetland for 1602–1604 we find the sixfold oath still being imposed in serious cases of witchcraft, at least in the first instance. The Orkney rentals for roughly the same period show several portions of land "escheat for witchcraft"'.⁵³⁵

With King Magnus Lawmender's⁵³⁶ national (1274) and city (1276) codes, all parts of Norway were subject to uniform legislation. Sorcery⁵³⁷ is mentioned in connection with serious crimes: 'for murder and consorting with spirits, for every kind of divination, for out-sitting [the practice of leaving one's body] to raise demons, and thereby the advancement of heathen practices'.⁵³⁸ Whoever is guilty of sorcery or commensurate crimes has 'forfeited his livestock, peace, all real property, and all his belongings'. No significant changes were made to Magnus Lawmender's national code until Norway entered into a union with Denmark in 1387. In *Christian IV's Norwegian Code of Laws* (1604), sorcerers⁵³⁹ were outlawed as they were according to Magnus Lawmender's National Law Code. If old Norse laws had an effect on witchcraft persecution on Orkney and Shetland, it is likely that Magnus Lawmender's national code was used and focused on *maleficium*. These laws would have contributed to calming the witch-hunt during the first decades of the seventeenth century on the northern islands, as the demonological element was not legally formalised in Denmark-Norway until a decree dating from 1617.⁵⁴⁰

According to Gordon Donaldson, prolonged Norse influence after the transaction of 1468-9 was stronger in Shetland than in Orkney. Scottish influence had already made itself felt in Orkney over a long period: 'In 1469 Shetland was essentially Norse, in race, in language and in institutions, whereas in 1468 Orkney was already very largely Scotticised'.⁵⁴¹ There was a considerable immigration of Scotsmen to Orkney before 1469.⁵⁴² Donaldson argues that the reason for the distinction between the two groups of islands is to be found in their earlier political history. The earls of Orkney had been half-Scottish by birth since before 1200, and by the fifteenth century the administration of Orkney was in the hands of Scotsmen,

⁵³⁴ OLA, MC, D31/4/4, 10.

⁵³⁵ OLA, Marwick, D31/4/4, 10

⁵³⁶ In Norwegian Magnus Lagabøter.

⁵³⁷ In Norwegian 'trolldom'.

⁵³⁸ Magnus Lagabøte's National Law Code, Mannhelgebolken, chapter 4; Willumsen, *Trollkvinne*, (1994), 56.

⁵³⁹ In Norwegian 'trollfolk'.

⁵⁴⁰ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne*, (1994), 56–9.

⁵⁴¹ Donaldson, G., 'The Scots Settlement in Shetland' in ed. D. J. Withrington (ed.), *Shetland and the Outside World 1469-1969* (Oxford, 1983), 8.

⁵⁴² Donaldson, 'The Scots', 9.

while from 1195 onwards Shetland's governors were appointed directly from Norway.⁵⁴³ There was one channel, however, through which Scots could find their way into Shetland as well as Orkney, and that was the church. The diocese of Orkney always included Shetland. There were Scottish bishops in Orkney from the late fourteenth century, 'and Scottish bishops in Orkney were apt to mean Scottish clergy in Shetland'.⁵⁴⁴ The archdeaconry of Orkney, as well as Shetland, was held by Scots long before 1469. So there was a difference between Scottish laymen and Scottish churchmen when it came to the role they played in official positions in Orkney and Shetland. Governmental influence from central Scottish authorities through administrative officials was stronger in Orkney than in Shetland.

The most striking illustration of the sharp contrast between Orkney and Shetland, according to Donaldson, is to be found in the linguistic arena. The Norse tongue was on its way to being superseded in Orkney before the transaction of 1468, in contrast to the situation in Shetland. In the 1430s the lawman in Orkney was using Lowland Scots, while in Shetland there are a number of documents in Norse dating from the sixteenth century, with the last as late as 1607. This suggests that there was a time-lag of something like a hundred and fifty years between the point at which the Scots tongue prevailed in Orkney and the point at which it prevailed in Shetland. During the sixteenth century, Scottish influence over Orkney grew and gradually the Norse way of life and language slipped away. By the late seventeenth century the Orkney variant of the Norse language, Norn, was spoken only by the inhabitants of one or two remote parishes.

Regarding the second point, the political unrest around 1614 and its consequences, a closer look is required. Profound changes occurred in the political history of these islands around 1600, preparing the ground for a self-contained economy and society. By a charter dated at Stirling in 1565, Lord Robert Stewart, a natural son of King James V, received from Mary, queen of Scots, his half-sister, a feu charter in respect of the old earldom and crown lands in Orkney and Shetland, together with the office of the sheriffship.⁵⁴⁵ 'In return for an annual duty of 3.000 merks payable to the crown, Lord Robert was free to acquire what he could in rent and dues, and from the fines gathered by his court'.⁵⁴⁶ The rule of the Stewarts on the northern islands has been described by Robert S. Barclay as 'an era of tyranny'.⁵⁴⁷ Robert Stewart, illegitimate son of King James V, named 'Bad Earl Robert' by Peter D.

⁵⁴³ Clouston, J. S., *History of Orkney* (Kirkwall, 1932), 229, 236–7, 240–9.

⁵⁴⁴ Donaldson, 'The Scots', 9.

⁵⁴⁵ *RMS*, v, 2078.

⁵⁴⁶ Barclay, R. S., 'Introduction', in Barclay, R. S. (ed.), *Court Books of Orkney and Shetland 1614–1615*, v. 3, (Edinburgh, 1967), xviii.

⁵⁴⁷ Barclay, 'Introduction', xxvii.

Anderson, is portrayed with few virtues; his 'reputation has been uninterruptedly odious from his early manhood to the present day'.⁵⁴⁸ His son, Patrick Stewart, is portrayed by Anderson as a complex and interesting character with an extravagant temperament, 'and the arrogance and groundless optimism which went with it'.⁵⁴⁹ His various feuds and extravagant use of money contributed to bring the Stewart interlude in the history of the northern islands to a close.

Patrick Stewart had been accused of exploiting the old laws for his own advantage. The use of Norse laws in either criminal or civil proceedings was forbidden by an act of the Scottish Privy Council in 1611.⁵⁵⁰ The magistrates of the islands were instructed 'to use the proper lawis of this kingdome to his majesties subjectis in all thair actions and caussis'.⁵⁵¹ Donaldson mentions that one reason for the act of 1611 might have been that in Norway King Magnus Lawmender's Law Book, dating from 1274, had been revised by Christian IV, James VI's brother-in-law, in 1604, and 'it would hardly have been appropriate for the part of the Scottish king's dominions to adopt laws freshly devised in a foreign country'.⁵⁵² In 1614, while Patrick Stewart was still in prison, his deputies on both Orkney and Shetland were discharged of their judicial offices and orders were issued that the castles of Kirkwall and Scalloway were to be surrendered.⁵⁵³

The relationship between Patrick and James Law was bound to be difficult, particularly because of property-related rental incomes. As Patrick was deep in debt, negotiations between his creditors turned out to Law's satisfaction. In 1608 Patrick was forced to hand over his palace to Law, who in the same year wrote a letter of complaint to the king about Patrick's oppression of his poor subjects on the islands. As a result Patrick was summoned to appear before the privy council in 1609, which he failed to do. He was then denounced as a rebel, the beginning of a six-year long alternation between confinement and the relaxation of his imprisonment which lasted until his death. During this period he appointed his only son, Robert Stewart (-1615), depute on Orkney. In November 1611 Robert and his followers were denounced as rebels and by spring 1612 there were rumours of a rising in Orkney and Shetland.⁵⁵⁴ However, James Law succeeded in having Robert Stewart

⁵⁴⁸ Anderson, P. D., *Robert Stewart. Earl of Orkney, Lord of Shetland* (Edinburgh, 1982), 143.

⁵⁴⁹ Anderson, P. D., *Black Patie* (Edinburgh, 1992), 146.

⁵⁵⁰ *RPC*, ix, 181.

⁵⁵¹ Donaldson, G. (ed.), *Court Book of Shetland 1615-1629* (Lerwick, 1991), xii.

⁵⁵² Donaldson, *Court*, xii.

⁵⁵³ *RPC*, ix, 181, 182.

⁵⁵⁴ Anderson, *Black Patie*, 98.

surrender his father's houses.⁵⁵⁵ Patrick was pressed by the council to resign all his rights in the earldom of Orkney, which he at last did.⁵⁵⁶ In 1614 a new attempt at an uprising was made by Robert Stewart, 'but after initial success in Orkney he was besieged in Kirkwall Castle and obliged to surrender'.⁵⁵⁷ He was condemned to death and executed in Edinburgh on 1 January 1615. Patrick hoped to obtain a royal pardon, but 'open rebellion had put Patrick beyond King James's mercy and he was executed on 6 February 1615'.⁵⁵⁸

Against this background of political drama the first decades of witchcraft persecution in Orkney took place. As for jurisdiction, Bishop Law, after having outmanoeuvred Patrick, held sheriff courts first in Orkney, in the cathedral of St Magnus, and afterwards in Shetland, at Scalloway castle. In Kirkwall he appointed 'bailies and councillors, ordering them to assist in the kirk's work, naming the mercat day, and curbing drunkenness'.⁵⁵⁹ During these courts he passed a number of 'acts' to deal with lesser crimes.⁵⁶⁰ Thomson comments that it is 'difficult to see how these 'acts' differed from the 'laws' which Patrick was accused of having treasonably made'.⁵⁶¹ Law also received a blank commission to remove anybody from Orkney on a ten day's notice, just as Patrick was accused of doing. Probably the judicial changes of Bishop Law around 1614 did not bring better justice to the northern islands. In my view the changes in law and court procedure that took place in Orkney and Shetland in the early seventeenth century were important for the witch-hunt. However, these changes would not have taken place without the church reform that restored the bishops. Scottish political intervention made its impact as well, but the setting up of new courts with Bishop Law was probably most relevant.

5.2 Source Material

The court books are the most important source material documenting witchcraft in the northern isles. The Court Books of Orkney and Shetland 1612–13 and 1614–15 give interesting information about the administration of the legal apparatus during the early years of Scottish law in these islands, a change from the Stewart earls and Norse laws to the law of Scotland, administered in turn by the bishop and the king's sheriff. The books show the constitution of the courts after the establishment of separate sheriffdoms, the system of court

⁵⁵⁵ Anderson, *Black Patie*, 99.

⁵⁵⁶ Anderson, *Black Patie*, 103–4.

⁵⁵⁷ Barclay, 'Introduction', xx.

⁵⁵⁸ Thomson, *History*, 178.

⁵⁵⁹ Anderson, *Black Patie*, 99.

⁵⁶⁰ Anderson, *Black Patie*, 99.

⁵⁶¹ Thomson, *History*, 175.

procedure under new officials, and how the law continued to be upheld. Also important are the country acts of Shetland and Orkney, dated respectively Scalloway 3 August 1615 and Kirkwall 7 November 1615. A similar, shorter series was passed at Scalloway in 1612.⁵⁶² The purpose of the country acts was to meet local needs, and to temper Scottish law to former usages.

The Court Book of 1612–13 begins with the proceedings of a court held in the cathedral church of Saint Magnus in Kirkwall, in July 1612. The presiding official was James Law, bishop of Orkney, the king's commissioner, sheriff and justice in Orkney and Shetland. Bailies and counsellors were elected and acts were passed. Bishop Law next appeared with his court in Shetland before he returned to Orkney in September 1612, and the period until May 1613 is concerned with proceedings in Kirkwall under the jurisdiction of Mr Henry Aitkin, sheriff depute. Authority was vested in the bishop. As Robert S. Barclay puts it: 'The ancient code of laws had been revoked, and court procedure and terminology approximated to that of a Scottish sheriff court'.⁵⁶³

The first sitting of sheriff James Stewart's court took place on 5 May 1615 in Kirkwall. The presiding officials were Henry Stewart and William Livingston, sheriff deputies. The procurator fiscal was Robert Coltart, who also held that office in the bishopric, and the clerk to the court was Henry Aitkin, sheriff depute in the bishopric. Ten days later the court was on circuit on the islands of Rousay, Stronsay and South Ronaldsay; afterwards it returned to Kirkwall, where several sittings were held in June, among them the trials of Janet Drever and Katherine Bigland for witchcraft. Both sheriff deputies were usually present.

Of previous works within the field of Orkney witchcraft, Ernest Walker Marwick (1915–77), a scholarly expert on Orkney folklore and tradition, must be mentioned. He published several books on Orkney folklore and traditions, studying oral as well as written sources. Marwick's private archive material was donated to the Orkney Archives. Among other material, a list of Orkney witches is found related to a manuscript article.⁵⁶⁴ Marwick's list contains the names of 65 witches for the period 1594–1880.⁵⁶⁵

The names of persons accused of witchcraft in Orkney are mainly documented in court records and presbytery minutes. Several trials have been published in transcription in *The Court Book of Orkney and Shetland 1612–1613* and the *Court Books of Orkney 1614–1615*.

⁵⁶² Barclay, R. S. (ed.), *The Court Book of Orkney and Shetland 1612–1613* (Kirkwall, 1962), 19–24.

⁵⁶³ Barclay, 'Introduction', xxvii.

⁵⁶⁴ Marwick, E. M., 'Northern Witches. With Some Account of the Orkney Witchcraft Trials', OLA, MC, D31/4/4.

⁵⁶⁵ 23 of these are not in SSW. However, MC is referred to under 'Other manuscript sources' in SSW.

In addition, there are manuscript sheriff court records until 1630 entitled *Sheriff Court Book Orkney and Zetland 1612–1630*, comprising the Court Book of Orkney and Shetland 1612–13. Several records have been published in the Maitland Club Miscellany.⁵⁶⁶ Records of six trials and one kirk session examination have been printed in the Miscellany of the Abbotsford Club.⁵⁶⁷ *RPC* contains some names in connection with appointment of commissions. Several trials have been published in folklore editions.⁵⁶⁸ In addition, some early travel books contain extracts from trials and references to trials.⁵⁶⁹

5.3 Frequency

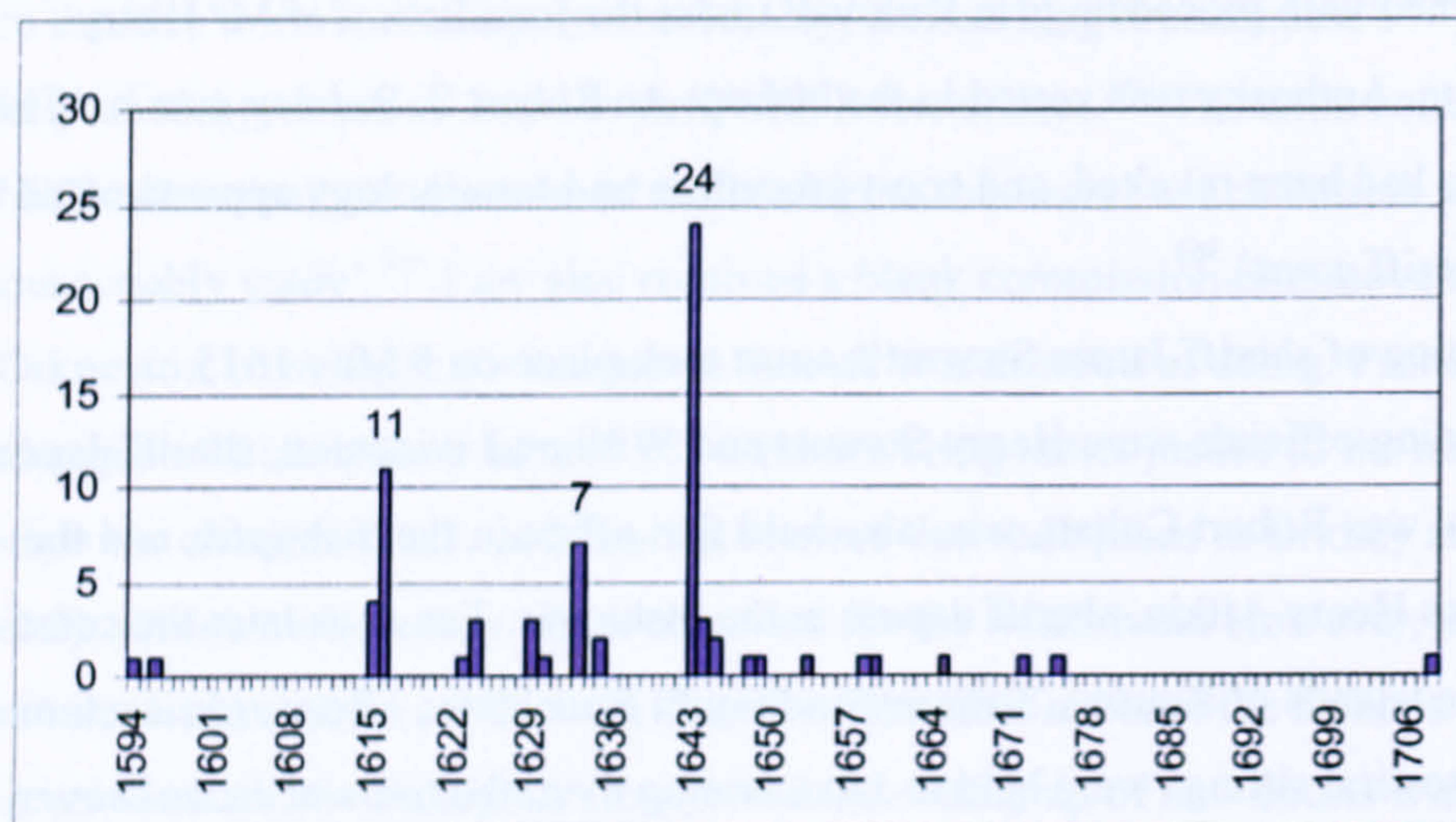


Figure 13 Witchcraft cases by year 1594–1708, Orkney

Orkney witchcraft covers approximately the same period as on the Scottish mainland, starting in the 1590s and continuing until 1708. SSW has registered 72 cases in this period. One person was brought before the presbytery twice, in 1643 and 1648.⁵⁷⁰ As for names, SSW has three double registrations, so the number of individuals accused is 68.⁵⁷¹ Statistical treatment,

⁵⁶⁶ Edinburgh, 1840, no. 51, vol. 2, part 1.

⁵⁶⁷ Edinburgh, 1837, vol. 1.

⁵⁶⁸ Thomas, N. W. (ed.), collected by Black, G. F., *County Folk-Lore. Examples of printed folk-lore concerning the Orkney & Shetland Islands*, vol. 3 (London, 1903).

⁵⁶⁹ Low, G., *Tour through Orkney and Shetland* (Kirkwall, 1789), and Dalyell, G., *The Darker Superstitions of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1834). MC also contains reference to Rogers, C., *Social Life in Scotland. From Early to Recent Times*, vol. iii (Edinburgh, 1886), 265–333.

⁵⁷⁰ Marjorie (Marion) Paplay. SSW has Marjorie Paplay and Marion Paplay registered as two different persons, but it is the same person.

⁵⁷¹ Katherine Craige, 1643, is also registered as Unknown Elsinquoy. Helen Wallis and Helen a Wallis, 1616, denote the same person, tried 13/6/1616, MC D31/4/3. Janet Drever and Jonet Drever are the same person. She is documented in 1615, but the reference to 1675 must be wrong. SSW has referred to Larner's sourcebook here, but Larner has only Janet Drever 1615.

however, will be based on SSW. Annual frequency is shown in Figure 13, based on Table 100 in the Appendix.⁵⁷² The periods 1594–1614 and 1646–1708 are characterised by isolated cases, few in number. The first two cases, Alesoun Balfour in 1594 and John Stewart in 1596, are famous. Balfour was tried in a local trial, accused of being hired by John Stewart to poison his brother. Extensive use of torture is documented, stocks and cashielaws. Her husband and children were tortured before her eyes. She was executed on Hedding Hill in Kirkwall. John Stewart was tried in a central trial in 1596, accused of murdering his brother, Patrick, earl of Orkney, by hiring Alesoun Balfour. The verdict was not guilty.

During the years 1615–45 there were three panics, the first from 1615–6 totalling 15 cases, the second in 1633 totalling 7 cases and the third in 1643–5 totalling 29 cases. It is notable that the peaks in Orkney do not coincide with any of the five largest peaks in witchcraft cases on the Scottish mainland. Although 1643 was a peak on the mainland, it was overshadowed by the bigger peaks. However, a similar pattern of local peaks, not necessarily coinciding with the national ones, can be found in numerous Scottish counties.

In trying to answer the question of why panics appear in the historical witch-hunt, several scholars have discussed the importance of political and religious unrest in the years before an outbreak of a witchcraft panic.⁵⁷³ If we look to Orkney to find triggering factors related to political or religious unrest in the years before the first panic, 1615–6, dramatic events took place due to the 1614 uprising and its suppression. The abrogation of Norse law was also an important factor because, as mentioned above, the legal focus of malefice then decreased and made possible a greater focus on demonology. The 1615–6 panic may have been a ‘new regime’ witch-hunt following the establishment of the sheriff court. Robert S. Barclay points out that the king’s sheriff seemed to have certain rights within the bishopric, shown by a protest by the king’s sheriff in 1614.⁵⁷⁴ For the year 1614 the sittings of the bishopric were few; in 1615 there were four sittings, all in Kirkwall and presided over by Mr Henry Aitkin, sheriff depute, who had served James Law in that capacity in previous years.⁵⁷⁵

There must have been an atmosphere of anxiety and fear in Orkney due to political unrest around 1614. But it is also important to bear in mind that the change to Scottish jurisdiction might have led to an increasing interest in witchcraft cases. By this time Scotland

⁵⁷² The year of Jonet Drever is wrong in SSW, where she is registered 1675. Both Marwick and Larner’s Sourcebook (no. 3067) have 1615. Larner’s reference is *The Court Book of Orkney and Shetland*, date 7.06.1615. The person registered in the Survey as Unknown Unknown is Janet Rigga, case date 11.11.1629, OLA, MC, DC11/791. The year of the trial of Scota Bess is c.1630, OLA, MC, D31/4/4.

⁵⁷³ Among others J. K. Swales and H. V. McLachlan, ‘Witchcraft and the status of women: a comment’, *British Journal of Sociology*, xxx, no. 3 (1979), 349–57.

⁵⁷⁴ Barclay, ‘Introduction’, xxviii–xxviii.

⁵⁷⁵ Barclay, *The Court Book of Orkney and Shetland 1612–1613*.

had experienced a large witch-hunt, while in Norway only witchcraft persecution on a minor scale had taken place.⁵⁷⁶ Looking more closely at the people accused of witchcraft in 1615, four individuals were tried before the sheriff court in Kirkwall in June 1615; Katherine Bigland, Janet Drever, Marioun Lening and Marioun Tailzeour.⁵⁷⁷ Three of them came from the north, Bigland and Drever from Westray and Lening from Papa Westray. Bigland was sentenced to execution, Drever was banished, Lening's and Tailzeour's sentences are not known. In 1616 eleven cases are registered in SSW, referring to nine individuals, all before the sheriff court. Three of these were tried in March, the rest in June. The sentence is known for Elspeth Reoch, who was executed.

Between 1617 and 1632 there was one case in 1623, three in 1624, three in 1629 and one in 1630. Two sentences of execution are known, Marable Couper and Anie Tailzeour, both tried in 1624 and burned on Lonhead in Kirkwall. Couper had been tried earlier for witchcraft and was banished, but refused to leave. Sentences are not known in the rest of the cases. None of the cases are linked by denunciation.

In the period 1633–42, seven cases are registered for 1633 and two for 1635. Three death sentences, Maryon Layland, Bessie Skebister, Issobell Sinclair, and one sentence of branding, Katherine Grieve, were passed in 1633. The last was implicated by another accused person, Layland. The rest of the cases in 1633 are not linked, so we do not have a panic here in the meaning of cases linked together.

A distinctive peak in the material occurs for the year 1643, with 24 cases. The presbytery was very active in searching for witches in that year, as 17 individuals were brought before the presbytery suspected of witchcraft. In the minutes we can read that from 5 April till 2 June, 12 people were 'considered of points of witchcraft'; two individuals were accused of using charms and one person for embracing charms.⁵⁷⁸ Several of these came from the islands in the north, Westray, Stronsay and North Ronaldsay.⁵⁷⁹ It is interesting to note that sheriff depute Henry Aitken brought accusations for witchcraft against several people living in North Ronaldsay.⁵⁸⁰ Nine people were implicated by another accused person, which is a high proportion of the 14 people in total in the Orkney material who were implicated by others.⁵⁸¹ However, the implications do not refer to witches' meetings and cannot be said to

⁵⁷⁶ Cf. Næss, Knutsen, Botnheim.

⁵⁷⁷ According to SSW Bigland, Drever and Lening were tied on 6 June, for Tailzeour only June is given. The court was sitting in Kirkwall 6–8 and 10 June 1615, cf. Barclay, 'Introduction', xxiv.

⁵⁷⁸ OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 227–32.

⁵⁷⁹ OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 223–35.

⁵⁸⁰ Barbara Yorston, Janet Pekok and Helen Tailzour.

⁵⁸¹ WDB_ImplicatedByAnother, SSW.

be of typical demonological character. There is one confession registered in SSW as demonic. Two death sentences were passed, Jonet Reid and Katherine Cragie. These two received death sentences on the same day and had a wide range of sorcery accusations levelled against them; in addition to Reid's confession that she kept company with the Devil, they both had reputations for *maleficium*, healing and white magic. For most of the cases we do not know the verdict and sentence.

The panic of 1643 may have been related to political and religious unrest in Scotland. In the three-kingdom situation after 1603, faced by James VI and Charles I, the problems were multiple, especially in matters concerning the church. The triumphs of the Covenanters' revolution in 1638 and the Solemn League and Covenant of 1643 may have put their stamps on the witch-hunt in Orkney, as Charles I pawned the lands to finance the royalist cause in the Civil War.⁵⁸² The Orkney earldom estates were leased by the king to a series of tax collectors, culminating with the seventh earl of Morton. By charter under the great Seal dated 15 June 1643 a document of the earldom and lordship to the earl of Morton was confirmed by the crown.

In the period after 1643 fourteen witchcraft trials took place in total, three in 1644, and two in 1645; the rest were scattered one per year, and after 1675 there was a final one in 1708. The sources are mainly presbytery records. For the later cases information comes from secondary sources and is scarce. For Elspeth Culsetter, in 1644, there is a post-trial note in presbytery records that she was burnt for witchcraft. Effie Rosie was banished in 1658, but for the rest of the cases the verdict and sentence are not known. By 1665, Kathareen Manson had been questioned repeatedly by the kirk session over the course of 15 years for charming and witchcraft.

The tendency in the Orkney material shows increasing witchcraft persecution in the period 1615–45, seen as peaks in the material, mostly in single years. After 1645 there was an even, but very low, flow of single witchcraft cases. After 1675 there is only a sole latecomer in 1708. This pattern does not coincide with mainland Scotland, where intense witchcraft persecution took place until 1662 and where panics occurred at intervals. For discussion of verdict and sentence in the Orkney witchcraft trials, see section 5.9 below.

5.4 Gender and status

Of the registered cases in Orkney, 63 were women and 9 were men. I refer to Table 100 in the Appendix. This means 87% of cases related to women and 13% related to men. There were no

⁵⁸² Donald, P., *AnUncounselled King. Charles I and the Scottish Troubles* (Cambridge, 1990), 318–9.

men accused in Orkney after 1643. Information about marital status is scarce. Five women and one man were married. One woman was widowed. Family relations seem to have played a part during the witchcraft trials. Katherine Bigland and Marioun Tailzeour, mother and daughter, were involved in the 1615 panic. In some cases, like the husband of Elizabeth Rennie in 1643, husbands were involved in cases. However, the information about gender, family relations and marital status is not sufficient to give an impression of the whole material.

Information about socioeconomic status is also scarce, see Table 101 in the Appendix. Four women from the lower socioeconomic layer and three very poor women are registered. Even if there are a few female vagabonds in the material, this is not enough evidence to maintain that poor women were particularly exposed to witchcraft persecution in Orkney.

5.5 The demonological element

There is some evidence around 1630–40 that demonological features were activated, either in the form of leading questions from the interrogators or in the confessions, as will be seen from the analysis of Barbara Bowndie's case below. Jonet Rendall, 1629, confessed to the demonic pact. Her demon was called Walliman. He had white clothes and a white head and a grey beard. In the 1630s several demonological cases came up. In 1633 Marion Layland confessed to witches' meetings, while Katherine Miller confessed to the same, also in 1633. Helen Isbuster confessed to having entered the demonic pact with a black man in 1635. In 1633 John Sinclair carried his distinguished 'sister' around at the direction of the Devil. Katherine Grieve confessed to witches' meetings and relations with a black man, again in 1633. Jonet Reid confessed in 1643 to having kept company with the Devil. When a confession of participation in witches' meetings was given, denunciation of others was also a feature. In total there are eight cases characterised as demonic secondary and four cases where witches' meetings are confessed to in the Orkney witchcraft cases, according to SSW. The panic of 1643, with the highest number of accused, is mostly characterised by malefice and cannot be described as demonological.

5.6 Panics versus non-panics

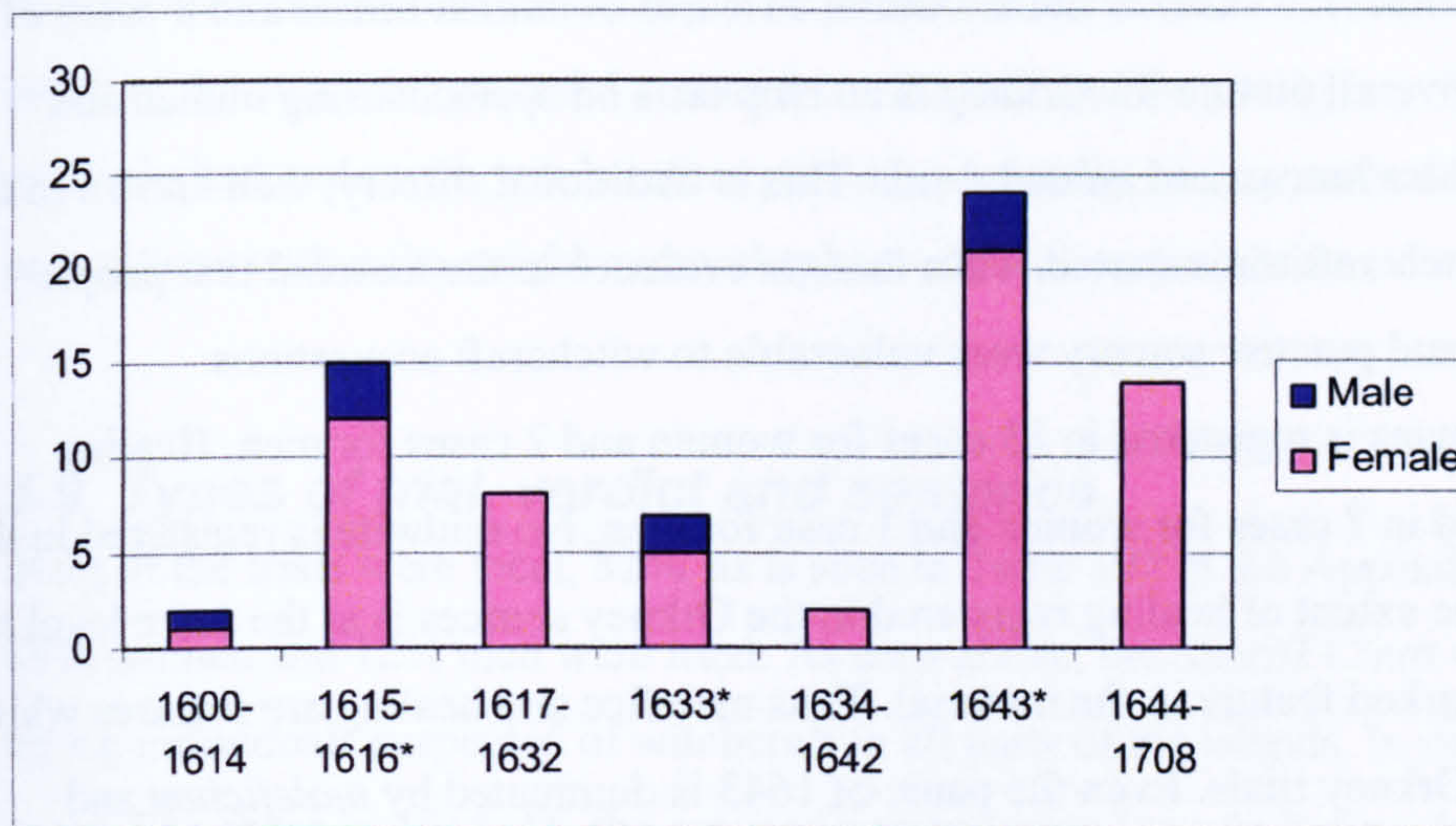


Figure 14 Panics versus non-panics , Orkney

Figure 14 illustrates local panic versus non-panic periods. Asterisk denotes panic periods. Panic periods are defined as 1615–16, 1633 and 1643. These are different from the Scottish national panics. The predominance of women in panics is clear, in the same way that the predominance of women is a feature permeating the historical witch-hunt as such. However, of the few men in the material, all, with one exception, are in panic years. This shows that men were not accused in isolated cases, but were involved in linked trials. For instance, William Gude and Magnus Lindsay were tried on 13 June 1616, the same date as Helen Wallis, Agnes Tulloch, Geillis Schlaitter and Agnes Scottie. Lindsay was accused of *maleficium*, the same as two of the women.

5.7 Maleficium, healing and fairy belief

For an area with relatively little evidence of demonology during witchcraft trials, it is interesting to look for other aspects of sorcery represented in the material. I have chosen to focus on three aspects of traditional sorcery represented in the material: *maleficium*, healing and fairy belief. Witchcraft persecution in Orkney is very much tied up with *maleficium*, mentioned in accusations as well as in confessions. Clearly this is the most frequent form of sorcery mentioned in the sources, notably in most instances mentioned also in cases with demonological features. Healing is mentioned almost to the same extent as malefice, while the belief in fairies is documented, though not as a dominant feature.

Malefice is registered in SSW with spells causing human and animal illness and death: 13 cases of human illness, 5 cases of human death, 11 cases of animal illness and 8 cases of animal death. The overall picture for Orkney is an emphasis on spells causing human and animal illness, but also human and animal death. This is traditional sorcery, well known in the centuries before witchcraft trials started. Thus there is evidence in the material that people rumoured to know and practise sorcery were vulnerable to witchcraft accusations.

Healing humans is registered in 13 cases for women and 2 cases for men. Healing animals is registered in 7 cases for women and 1 case for men. No midwife is registered in the Orkney sources. The extent of healing registered in the Orkney sources is at the same level as malefice and is a marked feature in the material. Thus malefice and healing are features which put a stamp on the Orkney trials. Even the panic of 1643 is dominated by *maleficium* and healing, not by demonology. In the later cases, divination comes in as an accusation, for instance in the case of Margaret Greeg in 1649.

The belief in fairies is represented in the material, but not to a large extent. As a primary characterisation 2 cases with women accused are registered. As a secondary characterisation, the cases of 6 women and 1 man are registered. Issobel Sinclair confessed in 1633 to fairy belief and second sight. In the same year, James Knarstoun confessed to fairy belief. Fairies were mentioned in 1643 by Mareon Cumlacoy. In 1644, Elspeth Culsetter mentioned fairy belief along with substantial knowledge of malefice and healing. Also in 1644, Barbara Bowndie mentioned fairies, as will be seen in the analysis below. In the sources from the latest period of witchcraft trials the sources are not detailed enough to say whether or not fairy belief was questioned or confessed.

5.8 Neighbourhood disputes

Neighbourhood disputes, quarrelling and cursing seem to have played minor roles as motives for witchcraft accusations in Orkney. As primary characterisations of cases, SSW has registered 4 cases of neighbourhood disputes, as secondary characterisations of cases similarly 4 cases are registered. Quarrelling is registered in the cases of 8 women and 1 man. Cursing is registered in the cases of 6 women and 2 men. Refused charity as a primary characterisation is registered in 2 cases, and as a secondary characterisation in 6 cases.

These numbers suggest that disagreements in local communities did play a part in the witchcraft trials as motives, but they could not be said to have played major roles. However, once again it has to be borne in mind that the focus of witchcraft persecution was the practise

of different types of sorcery, not the motives for performing sorcery. The interrogation concentrated on practice of sorcery. The context of the sources also has to be remembered, as much of the surviving material comes from the kirk and the presbytery. These contexts certainly had to do with witchcraft as part of an ungodly society, rather than the origin of accusations within the neighbourhood sphere of local communities.

5.9 *Types of trial, verdict and sentence*

Most of the trials were local, 82%, as is seen in Table 102 in the Appendix. Of the local trials, 88% women and 12% men were tried. As seen above, the Sheriff Court was a circuit court trying individuals suspected of witchcraft in all parts of the islands. In several of the early cases, like those in 1615–16, the accused persons were brought before the Court of the Bishopric as well as the sheriff court. The latter passed sentence.

Of the cases for which the verdict is known, in one of the earliest in 1596, one man, John Stewart, was accused in a central trial and found not guilty. In local courts 15 women were found guilty, while only 1 woman was found not guilty. No men were documented as being found guilty in local trials. The figures indicate that once a woman was brought before a local court in a witchcraft case, her chances of acquittal were small. But because of the large number of blanks and the few individuals in total, these suggestions will have to be tentative.

As for sentences, Table 103 in the Appendix shows that 12 women were executed, 2 banished and 1 branded, all in local courts. This shows that out of the 15 women found guilty in local courts, four-fifths were executed. But the large number of unknown sentences, 57 out of 72, makes it difficult to draw any conclusion.

5.10 *Barbara Bowndie, 1644*

5.10.1 *The voice of the law*

Barbara Bowndie was first accused in 1643, the worst year of witchcraft accusations in Orkney. In this case, where interrogation is done first before the presbytery, next before the local court, the voice of the law is heard partly through ecclesiastical officials, and partly through civil law officials.⁵⁸³ Barbara Bowndie mentioned several women during the interrogation, but she refused to denounce anybody.⁵⁸⁴ She was repeatedly asked if she knew

⁵⁸³ I would like to thank Diane Baptie for the transcription of the document.

⁵⁸⁴ According to SSW the named witches during Barbara Bowndie's trial were Elspeth Baikie, Elsinquoy Unknown, Elspeth Paplay, Marion Paplay, Marjorie Paplay. As mentioned earlier, Marion Paplay is identical

something about Marjorie Paplay, who had been denounced a year earlier by Elspeth Culsetter, burnt for witchcraft. The issue of the denouncing of Marjorie Paplay, who lived in St Ola, part of the area where Bishop Law assumed the function of sheriff, was brought before the presbytery on 3 November 1642 by Mr Henry Smith, who required that she 'might be enacted in the Shirref court bookes to underly the Law, as others who were delated be the said Elspeth Culsetter as guiltie of witchcraft, were'.⁵⁸⁵ Marjorie Paplay's son, James Baikie, protested against the slandering of his mother. She was left with a warning, as Henry Smith 'protested' that 'Marjorie Paplay her self should compeer and pursue her slanderers by giving in a bill of complaint conforme to the order' and that 'whensoever the said Marjorie compeers and complaines he adheres to his former protestations, earnestly requiring the presbytrie to take the samyne to their serious consideration'.⁵⁸⁶ Marjorie Paplay was still in the searchlight of suspicion, and several times during her interrogation Barbara Bowndie was asked to name Marjorie Paplay as a witch, which means that a year later the presbytery still wanted to get something on Paplay. They did not succeed, but Marjorie Paplay was brought before the presbytery again in 1648, and even though the outcome is unknown, her case is a good illustration of the reputation of witchcraft clinging to a person for years. The outcome of the case brought by Marion Paplay and Elspeth Baikie is not known.

Barbara Bowndie was 'incarcerat for witchcraft to be examined in face of presbytrie'.⁵⁸⁷ Precautions were taken against tumults when the examination was ordained: 'Ordaines to motion unto the Brethren of the presbytrie that they would take some course anent the ordering of the house, for avoiding of confusion and tumult'.⁵⁸⁸ They might have been worried about either her friends or spectators:

It is ordained that at the examination of Barbara Boundie quhilk is continued unto the morrow, that three Brethren shall be examiners of her in face of the presbytrie and that every brother shall give information unto these three, and if any Brother that thinks his Information not fullie acted, shall have Libertie (having protested for Lieve) to examine her himselfe, upon the points to be laid unto her charge.⁵⁸⁹

Master George Johnston and Master Patrick Waterstoun, younger, were ordained on 8 November to concur with the Moderator in the examination. The next day the two men asked Mr David Watsone, minister, and Patrick Smythe of Braco, ruling elder, to assist them in

with Marjorie Paplay, and Elsinquoy Unknown is identical with Katherine Craige. The case against Elspeth Paplay started on 3 November, the cases against Marion Paplay, Elspeth Baikie and Katherine Craige started on 9 November. Katherine Craige was burned on 22 July 1643.

⁵⁸⁵ OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 204.

⁵⁸⁶ OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 208.

⁵⁸⁷ OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 250.

⁵⁸⁸ OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 250–1.

⁵⁸⁹ OLA, OPR, H2/1082/1, p. 253.

going to Barbara Bowndie 'who was then presently in ward to deall with her in privat, by prayer, and conference before they came in publick (...) After prayer and conference with the said Barbara in privat, she was presented publickly before the presbytrie and accused upon the points following.'⁵⁹⁰ This happened on 9 November, six days after she was imprisoned. Nine points are mentioned, all of them related to the Devil, use of devilish witchcraft or witches' meetings.

The interrogator constantly focused on Barbara Bowndie's relationship with the Devil. As she denied this consistently, it was necessary to use torture, and the next day, 10 November, Mr Walter Stewart and Mr David Watson were ordained to form a supplication to 'the Secret counsell for purchasing a co[m]mission to put Barbara Boundie to tortures, upon grounds publickly declared in the presbyterie'.⁵⁹¹ Master Thomas Cok and Master George Johnston were ordained to go to 'the Shirref, and desire him that Barbara Boundie now in firmance, should be still retained unto such tyme as all lawfull meanes of tryall that can be thought upon, be used towards her'.⁵⁹² They reported that the sheriff had promised to retain Barbara Boundie in prison, till the answer of his letter returned from the south, 'And that he should doe nothing thereanent but be the Brethren's advyse'.⁵⁹³ This is the last which is recorded about Barbara Bowndie, showing the cooperation between the presbytery and the sheriff.

The next spring, however, Barbara Bowndie's name was mentioned again in the minutes. On 1 May 1644, James Baikie declared that he wanted an extract of Barbara Bowndie's examination, which was granted him. He also 'protested, that he might have the extract of the Law, and practice of this presbyterie, wherupon the condescent of the brethren unto Master Henrie Smythe his protestation tertio novemb: 1642 Sess.2. was grounded, viz That no person delated unto the civill Judge, as guiltie of witchcraft, should be heard to complaine that they are slandered etc.'⁵⁹⁴ Apparently the presbytery agreed with Smith's protestation and thus refused to allow a slander case or to hand over relevant documents.

5.10.2 The voices of the interrogators and the accused

The points of interrogation are recorded in a way possible to distinguish the questions posed to her and the answers given. The interrogators tried to get as much out of her about the Devil as possible, from point 1 onwards: '1. primo, concerning her saying, that the Devill told her

⁵⁹⁰ OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 254.

⁵⁹¹ OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 258.

⁵⁹² OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 258.

⁵⁹³ OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 260.

⁵⁹⁴ OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 286.

that if she should be put to death, the whole cornes should be blowne in the ayre by him. *Answered* she sp-rt [*unclear word at end of line*] for weaknesses of her owne flesh, and for feare of her [life?]⁵⁹⁵ [*My italics.*] From the beginning, the interrogators used everything she had said against her, not taking into consideration her imprisonment and alleged threats. The interrogators may have tried to obtain confirmation of an earlier confession. As she denied all the points which were raised, the insistence upon demonological features was constant: '2. Secundo, *Being asked*, if she upon occasion of necessitie in Zetland, did condescend to serve the Devill. *Answered* that being travelling with ane unhoven⁵⁹⁶ childe four years and being fainted by the way she became speechless, and so remained for the space of 24 houres, and was sore tormented, and the people said, that she had been with the Farie. She *answered*, she saw no Farie'.⁵⁹⁷ [*My italics.*] The interrogators tried to bring forth as arguments rumours they had heard, but it had no effect. There seems to be an assumption here that being with the fairies has a demonological aspect.

The third point suggests that she herself had been active as a discoverer of witches. This too she denied. Then the witches' meeting was brought onto the agenda:

4. Quarto, being posed in particular, concerning the Devill his apparitions in diverse shapes *upon the Ball-Ley*, and his having carnall copulation with Marjorie Paplay at that tyme, as a man hes adoe with a woman, *Answ: That Steven Angusone brought stark aill to her, which made her to speake these wordes in Mr Patrick Waterstoun, and Master Patrick Weemse their hearing. Whereupon Mr Patrick Waterstoun replied that she spake these words in presence of the Brethren, before Mr Patrick Weemse did speake with her and repeated it over againe before the brethren in both their audience, being as yet sober, and that it was afterwards, that a drink of small aill was brought unto her by Steven Angusone at her earnest requyst, to quench her thirst, and (she – interlined) did but take one drink of it, all the quhyle that the said Master Patrick was with her, reserving the rest in the stoup: And being oftentimes in publick exhorted be Master Patrick Waterstoun, that she should not lie upon Marjorie Paplay, nor no honest woman, did at that tyme reply unto him, God forgive you that beares over much with them All which was spokene before she got that drink of aill'*.⁵⁹⁸ [*My italics.*]

It seems clear that the individuals from the presbytery who went to her 'for prayer and conference' tried to make her confess to participation in a witches' meeting by serving her ale. The occasion when she was given ale comes up as a central piece of information, as she herself gives as reason for her mentioning the ball-ley that she was given strong ale, while those who visited her maintained she confessed this while she was still sober. Nevertheless, their methods for making her talk did not succeed, as she retracted her statement afterwards

⁵⁹⁵OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 254.

⁵⁹⁶ Means unchristened, to hove means to raise, i.e. here a child not raised at the font.

⁵⁹⁷OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 254–255. The case of Elspeth Reoch is discussed by D. Purkiss in *Troublesome Things*, 90–6.

⁵⁹⁸OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 255.

and they had to send a request to torture her. The idea of witches meeting at a ball-ley⁵⁹⁹ is interesting. Locations where games were held may be traced in place-names on Orkney as far back as 1329.⁶⁰⁰ The Ba'Fields or Ba'greens were scattered throughout Orkney in the middle of the seventeenth century, in the meaning of a field where men and boys played football.⁶⁰¹ We have the same image of witches having meetings at the ball-ley in the material from Finnmark, where during the 1620s several women confessed that they had taken part in witches' meetings at 'Balduolden', a word with the same meaning.⁶⁰² The fifth point repeats the previous one:

5 Quinto, Being asked againe whither she knew it to be of veritie, that she had seen the Devill ly with Marjorie Paplay on the Ball-Ley? *Replied that she knew nothing of it, but such as she was tryed upon,* And being asked what that meant to be tryed upon? *Replied that the young co[m]missar John Aitkin had said to her, tell mee about Marjorie Paplay what ane woman she is, and thou shall never want thy Life,* spake more then enough of the said Marjorie at that tyme, and of sundrie other honest women, such as Elspeth and Marion Paplayes, and Elspeth Baikie and the good wife of Essinquoy. *But Barabra Boundie said that she never knew no ill to these women.*⁶⁰³ [My italics.]

Again we see that the interrogators tried to make her confirm what she might have been tricked into saying about Marjorie Paplay during the 'privat' interrogation. In the sixth point she maintained she had been led to say something she did not mean:

6. Sexto, being asked concerning Thomas Lenton his being put to death by Marjorie Paplay her witchcraft by putting a quhyte thing lyke calk in his drink. *Answ: that what she had spoken therof was put in her mouth by Master Patrick Weemse.* Master Patrick Waterstoun replied that that could not be, *in respect he was beside and knew the contrair,* and declared further, that it being inquyred be Master Patrick Weemse if she knew that Thomas Lenton had gotten any wrong, after long entreate made to her to declare the same, if she knew ought of that matter, *did at length declare that the said Thomas was witched be Marjorie Paplay;* and upon his demand she told the manner of it, by scraping in etc. Barbara Boundie answered that she had never spoken concerning Thomas Lenton, if she had not been spired at, be the said Master Patrick Wemmse.⁶⁰⁴ [My italics.]

In the seventh point the question about denunciation was repeated and denied by her and in the eighth point a witches' meeting came up: 'if she was one of the fourscore and nynteen that danced on the Links of Munes in Hoy? *At first denyed, but thereafter confessed that she said it,* which being conferred with her first words in saying that it was but sixe yeers, since the Devill deceived her, is found to varie in her speeches, for it is elleven yeers, or thereby, since the dancers in Munes were first spoken of'.⁶⁰⁵ This is a good indication that oral narratives

⁵⁹⁹ The word 'ley' means a tract of open grass-land, meadow or pasture, found chiefly as a second element in Scottish placenames from an early date. 'Ball-grene' or 'Balgrene' means a green on which ball-games are played, ref. *DOST*.

⁶⁰⁰ From the Norse term *leik-kvi*, sports- or games-quoy. Farm lands bought by Katherine, Countess of Orkney, 1329, is recorded as a *Leikakvi*. *Records from the Earldom of Orkney, 1299–1614*, SHS, 2nd series, vol. vii, 12.

⁶⁰¹ Robertsen, J. D. M., *The Kirkwall Ba'. Between the Water and the Wall* (Edinburgh, 2005), 230.

⁶⁰² Mentioned for instance in the trial of Kirsten Sørensdatter, SATØ, SF 6, fos. 27r–29r.

⁶⁰³ OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 255.

⁶⁰⁴ OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 256.

⁶⁰⁵ OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 256.

with demonological content had been told by peasants for many years; Bowndie – or the interrogators - even tried to date when the story first appeared in the area.

The last point again tried to pin demonological practice on Paplay: ‘Being asked what questions John Aitkin spired concerning Marjorie Paplay? Answ: he spired about the hand of the dead man, that lay above her bed head and stired about her aill; But spired not, if the Devill lay with her upon the Ball Lay; neither yet spired he about any of her sisters, nor of Elspeth Baikie’.⁶⁰⁶ As naming other women was a well-known feature during the confessions of linked trials, no doubt this was an attempt to make the trials continue. The fate of sentenced witches created anxiety among people, as may be seen by the following entry:

Patrick Smythe of Braco declared that Barbara Boundie had said unto persons of respect, that they should have a care to bid the officers keep away some folk from her, In respect that offer had been made unto her by a Ledder of a tow to hang her selfe, or of a knyfe to stick her selfe, quhilk would be ane easier death for her, then to be burnt. *Denyed that either she said it, or yet that it was true.*⁶⁰⁷ [*My italics.*]

I interpret this part of the confession as referring to an utterance she had made earlier, where she said that she wanted to commit suicide. Maybe she had been in great despair while imprisoned. Even if the points of accusations were finished, she continued to deny everything which was said about her, including the declaration by Patrick Graham, who reported that Barbara Bowndie said that shortly after she was put in ward, ‘John Baikie his woman came unto her, and said false co[m]mon thief Looke that thou lie not honest women, *Denyes*’.⁶⁰⁸ This is also an indication of the fear and anxiety in the community once people knew that a woman was imprisoned. People knew the methods used to obtain a confession and they feared that they would be named. Apparently women were more afraid of denunciation than men.

Master Patrick Graham, one of the men who had examined her first, declared that Barbara Bowndie said to him ‘that the Farie appeared unto her beside the Ball-Ley coming out of Essinquoy, and told her all that she had spoken of Marjorie Paplay unto the ministers. *Denyes this also*’.⁶⁰⁹ The mixture of witches’ meetings and fairies is repeated, as the interrogator insisted continually that she should name Marjorie Paplay. Then the brother of John Aitkin gave witness:

Master James Aitkin *for cleiring of his brother John Aitkin* said that she had spoken these speeches of Marjorie Paplay, in Fubister, *before she met with John Aitkin after her taking. Denyed it*, and said that when she was taken, she ran into the sea, to her craig, and was flyed out of her wit. And being further delt with be Master James Aitkin anent his brother, said that if he had not first lifted that purpose, she

⁶⁰⁶ OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 256.

⁶⁰⁷ OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 257.

⁶⁰⁸ OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 257.

⁶⁰⁹ OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 257.

would not have lifted that purpose to him. Being asked touching Cummer Dyk, if she knew any witchcraft to her? *Denyed*⁶¹⁰ [*My italics.*]

To the very end of the interrogation the brothers try to make her denounce other women, but she refused. Altogether it seems that Barbara Bowndie's answers were rather incoherent at times, especially during the questioning of her 'in privat' before the public interrogation. She was tricked into saying things she would not confirm afterwards, as the whole case seems to have been a vendetta circling around Marjorie Paplay. From a narratological perspective, the force of repetition is strong in this text, and it underlines the brethren's necessity to obtain a confession from her that corresponded with the ideas of demonology. Barbara Bowdie does not bring demonological elements into the interrogation; she denies all the attempts of the interrogators to make her deliver a demonological confession. The discourse is persuasive and sly, coloured by the interrogators' exploitation and manipulation of pieces of information given by Barbara Bowndie earlier, a method likely to take the outcome in a direction made up in advance. Her case ended on 3 April 1644, when there was an entry that they would wait for more information about her from Shetland: 'As touching Barbara Boundie, whom the Shirref promised to retaine in firmancie, according as the presbyterie should advyse him; the Brethren thought good this day that she should be retained still, untill such tyme as they expected dittaes against her to come from Zetland, and the Shirref to be advertised of this be Mr George Johnston and David Heart'.⁶¹¹ This means she must have lived in Shetland before she came to Orkney.

5.11 Conclusion

Within a judicial context the interrogators had the urge to find the right type of witches, namely those who had a close relationship with the Devil. Ernest W. Marwick emphasises the importance of demonological elements in the seventeenth-century understanding of a real witch. Even if 'the concept of witchcraft and magic the Norsemen took with them to Orkney was one which arose out of centuries of folklore and tradition',⁶¹² he maintains,

if we are to understand the nature of the Orkney witch trials as legalistic exercises which were conducted according to Scottish law (itself a reflection of the prevailing climate of opinion in the sixteenth century, when it was passed by the parliament in Edinburgh) we must think of a witch as a person who has dealings with the Devil or evil spirits, and who is able by their co-operation to perform supernatural acts. In popular phraseology, the witch sold her soul to the Devil.⁶¹³

⁶¹⁰ OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 257.

⁶¹¹ OLA, OPR, CH2/1082/1, p. 278.

⁶¹² OLA, MC, D31/4/4, p. 13.

⁶¹³ OLA, MC, D31/4/4, p. 17.

I share Ernest Marwick's view that the relation to the Devil was the most important feature of the historical Orkney witch. In this respect Orkney witchcraft trials did not differ in principle very much from historical witchcraft trials elsewhere. This could also be seen as elite versus popular instead of Scottish versus Norse, because demonological ideas were originally notions brought to the local communities by the learned elite. The prevailing view among legal officials and clergy was the same in all countries haunted by the witch-hunt. The witch-hunt in Orkney shows that there was a need for trials enforced from above by the Scottish legislation and by the implementation of this legislation in all parts of the kingdom, through kirk and secular courts. This consolidation was taken care of particularly by the presbytery. As is seen in the reading of Barbara Bowndie's case above, she was repeatedly asked direct leading questions, all of them of a demonological character. She refused to confess to demonological features even after pressure. Apparently she knew about stories of witches' meetings, but she denied participation. It seems that a person who came under the searchlight of suspicion due to her reputation for traditional sorcery and healing was pressed during interrogation to deliver confessions with demonological aspects.

The picture of Orkney witchcraft trials seems to be pretty average in a Scottish context as regards representation of gender. Likewise for occurrence of malefice, healing and fairy belief in the sources. Neighbourhood disputes, cursing and quarrelling as motives for casting spells do seem to equal mainland Scotland. The same holds true for fairy belief. This type of undercurrent of traditional sorcery and folk belief was not particularly new or dominant during the period of the witch-hunt and cannot in my view explain the hunt. There are two points where one might find a difference in Orkney in contrast to mainland Scotland. The first point is the change in the legal system around 1610 and the setting up of new legal institutions with Bishop Law and the sheriff courts. These changes might have contributed to the rush of witchcraft trials in Orkney during the next three decades. The second point is difference in frequency, as the witch-hunt in Orkney was more or less over before 1650.

Thomson maintains that the first half-century of Scottish rule on Orkney is characterised as a period of peace. Under Lord Henry Sinclair's management, 'a remarkable revival of family fortunes restored the essential substance of power'.⁶¹⁴ A self-contained economy and society in Orkney might have influenced the witch-hunt. Similarly, remains of restrictive Norse laws related to witchcraft persecution might have influenced the hunt.

⁶¹⁴ Thomson, *History*, 131–2.

6 Shetland

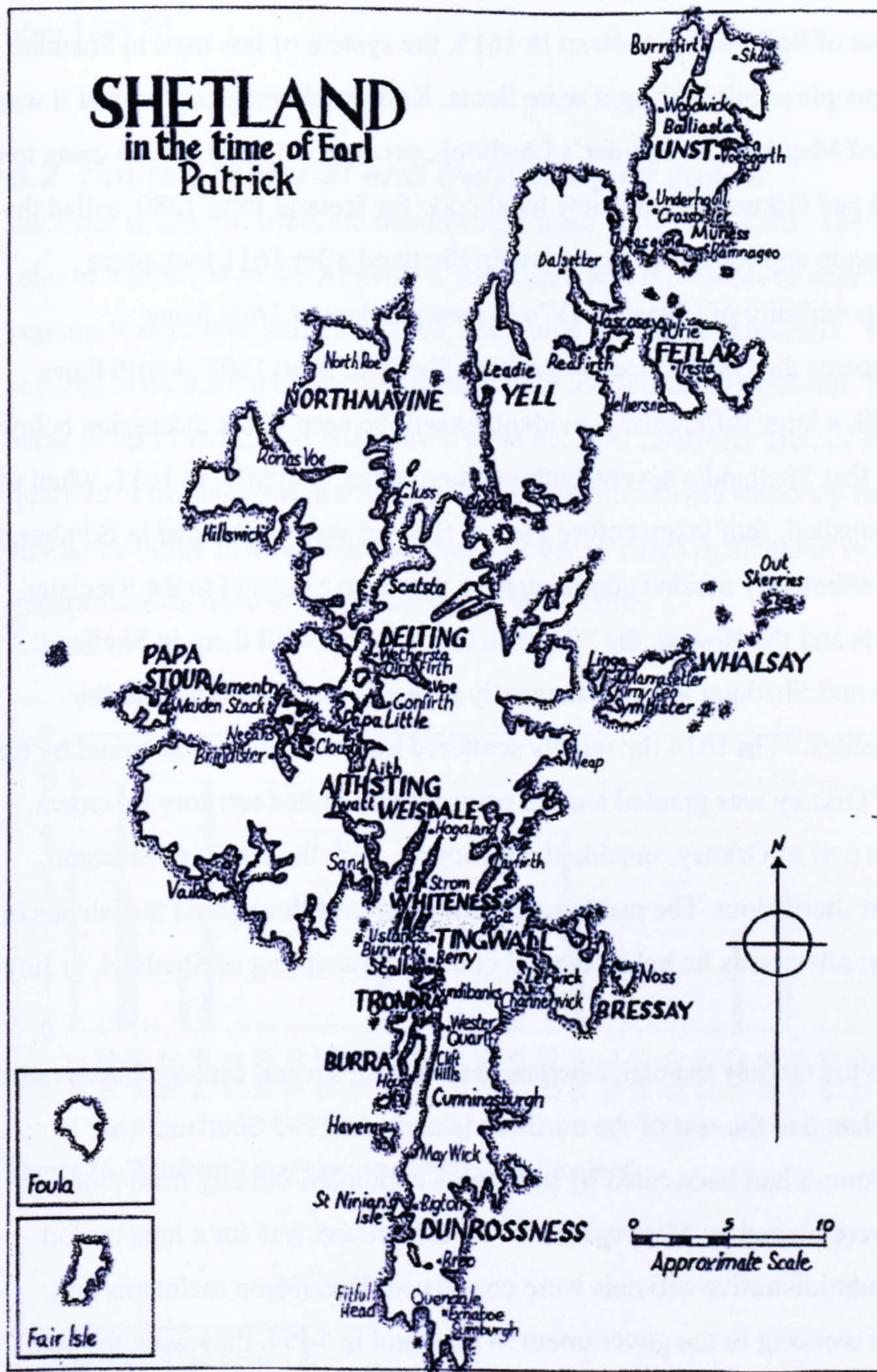


Figure 15 Map of Shetland

6.1 General

Even more than the witchcraft sources from Orkney, the witchcraft sources from Shetland contribute to strengthen the argument that geographical distance from the Scottish mainland tended to weaken the intensity of the historical witchcraft trials. In Shetland the witchcraft

trials were few in number. The demonological element was present for a short period, but it did not get a foothold.

After the demise of Earl Patrick Stewart in 1615, the system of law used in Shetland was Scottish, and the people administering it were Scots. Knut Robberstad argues that it was the Gulathing version of Magnus Lawmender's Lawbook, accepted in 1274, which came to be introduced in Shetland and Orkney, not the new legal code for Iceland from 1280, called the Jonsbok.⁶¹⁵ The systematic application of Scots law in Shetland after 1611 took place explicitly to avoid the possibility of Christian IV's Norwegian law of 1604 being invoked.⁶¹⁶ If one compares the court proceedings from Shetland from 1602–4 with those from 1612 and 1615–29, a huge difference is evident, as will be seen in the discussion below. Brian Smith maintains that Shetland's seventeenth century began, abruptly, in 1611, when the 'foreign laws' were abolished, four years before Patrick Stewart was guillotined in Edinburgh. 'By these actions they effectively handed administrative power in Shetland to the Sinclairs, the Mouats, the Cheynes and the Bruces, the "Scottish lairds" as we call them in Shetland'.⁶¹⁷

In 1612 Orkney and Shetland were permanently annexed to the crown, with the exception of the kirk estates.⁶¹⁸ In 1614 the widely scattered kirk estates were acquired by the king, and the bishop of Orkney was granted a more compact and united territory by crown charter.⁶¹⁹ The northern part of Orkney, outside the bishopric, with the whole of Shetland, constituted the principal sheriffdom. The magistrate went on circuit throughout the islands in June and July each year; afterwards he held a central court, the Lawthing of Shetland, in July or August.

As mentioned in the Orkney chapter, Shetland had during several centuries been more influenced by Norway than had the rest of the northern islands. In 1195 Shetland was detached from the earldom; it had been ruled by governors appointed directly from Norway, and lands in Shetland were owned by Norwegians.⁶²⁰ Thus Shetland was for a long period mainly Norse as far as administrative officials were concerned. Donaldson maintains that even if there were Scots working in the government in Shetland in 1469, they were few and far between, in contrast to the situation in Orkney. However, there was a difference between Scottish laymen and Scottish churchmen, as Scots found their way into the kirk in Shetland as

⁶¹⁵ Robberstad, K., 'Udal Law', in D. J. Withrington (ed.), *Shetland and the Outside World 1469–1969* (Oxford, 1983), 51.

⁶¹⁶ Robberstad, 'Udal', 49–68.

⁶¹⁷ Smith, B., "'Lairds" and "Improvement" in the 17th and 18th century Shetland', in T. M. Devine (ed.), *Lairds and improvement in the Scotland of the enlightenment* (Strathclyde, 1978), 11.

⁶¹⁸ *APS*, iv, 481, c.15.

⁶¹⁹ *RGSS*, 1609–20, 1119.

⁶²⁰ Donaldson, 'The Scots', 9.

well as in Orkney. As for language, the Norse tongue was well on its way to being superseded in Orkney before 1468, whereas in Shetland it continued to be in general use for a long time after 1469.⁶²¹

6.2 Source material and frequency of cases

Shetland witchcraft trials are documented from 1602 until 1725. The total number is 31.⁶²² I refer to Table 104 in the Appendix, for names and references to sources. Of the accused persons 8 were men and 23 women, see Table 105 in the Appendix. This means 26% of the accused were men, a higher percentage than for Scotland in general. 5 of the men were accused up to 1612, 1 in 1616 and 2 were accused relatively late, in 1674 and 1708. Three quarters of the cases were before 1675, which mirrors the tendency in the rest of Scotland. It should be borne in mind that the total number of cases in Shetland is small, so that generalisations have to be considered with caution.

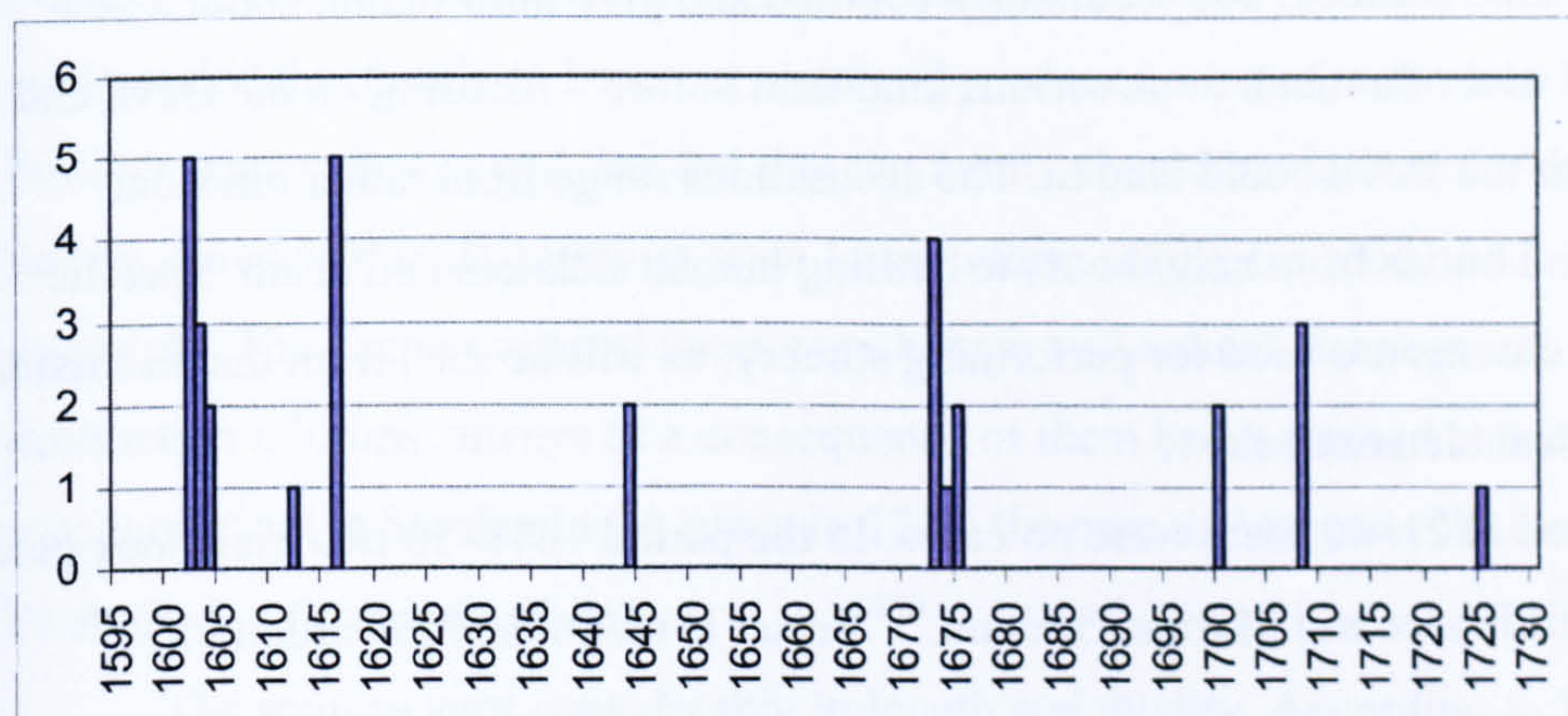


Figure 16 Witchcraft cases by year 1602–1725, Shetland

⁶²¹ Donaldson, 'The Scots', 9.

⁶²² SSW documents 29 accused persons from Shetland when accused is linked to Case_date. However, one person is mentioned twice, as Jonka Kyneis is the same person as Jonet Dynneis. To these 28 persons three persons must be added. The first is Helen Stewart's mother, ref. Sinclair, G., *Satans Invisible World* (Edinburgh, 1685), 231 and Larner, C., Lee, C. H. and Maclachlan, H. V., *A Sourcebook of Scottish Witchcraft* (Glasgow, 1977) 221, where two unnamed persons from Shetland are listed (nos. 2901, 2902). Larner has used the year 1675 for these two cases. The reference is Sinclair's book mentioned above, which was published 1685. Sinclair says: 'In Shetland a few years ago (...)'. So the year seems to be a bit uncertain according to the Sinclair reference, and Larner does not give any other source. So it is uncertain from where she got the year 1675 for Helen Stewart's trial. The second is Magnus Laurenson, whose trial records are in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland. The last person is Jonat Archibald, 1602, ref. Donaldson, *Court*, 29. She is also mentioned in Thomas, *County*, 160. She is neither mentioned in Larner's Source Book nor in SSW. This adds up to 31 persons.

The frequency of Shetland witchcraft trials is shown in Figure 16 above. Ten witchcraft trials took place before 1610: five in 1602, three in 1603 and two in 1604.⁶²³ Those from 1603 and 1604 are documented partly in J.G. Dalyell's *The darker superstitions of Scotland*, and partly in *The Court Book of Shetland 1602–4*.⁶²⁴ These early cases are characterised by brief entries in the court records, stating only the accused's name, the type of crime they were accused of, and the sentence. The cases deal mainly with accusations related to stealing milk and butter from neighbours, a traditional form of sorcery now for the first time criminalised and brought before the courts as witchcraft. The accused individuals were fined when they failed to quit themselves with the 'sixter aithe' – making six persons swear an oath that they were innocent – or with the 'larych aithe' – making two persons swear an oath of innocence.

In the period 1611–20 six trials took place, one in 1612 and five in 1616.⁶²⁵ The five trials in 1616 are documented in Dalyell and in *The Sheriff Court Book of Shetland 1615–1629*.⁶²⁶ In particular, three of the cases in 1616, Barbara Scord/Tomasdochter, Katherine Jonesdochter and Jonet Dynneis, are of interest, as this is the first time demonological trials appear in the Shetland sources. The records are detailed and give information about a new type of witchcraft trial of a much more serious kind than before – focusing on the Devil and what relations with the Devil could lead to. The accusations range from rather innocent stealing of milk and butter from neighbours to causing human sickness and death. Specific objects as well as charms are used for performing sorcery, as will be seen from the discussion of the demonological element below.

In the period 1621–40 there were no cases. In the period 1641–50 two trials took place, both in 1644, Juenit Fraser and Marion Pardoun.⁶²⁷ Fraser is mentioned in Pardoun's

⁶²³ Donaldsen, G. (ed.), *The Court Book of Shetland 1602–1604* (Edinburgh, 1954). The names from 1602 are Mareon Geilsdochter, pp. 22, 57, Poile Watson, pp. 22, 57, Wife of Poile Watson, pp. 22, 57, Nicole Culsetter, pp. 30, 61, from 1603 Mareon in Houle, p. 90–1. In the Survey she is listed as Mareon Unknown.

⁶²⁴ The names from Donaldson, *The Court*, (1954) are: Catherine Thomasdochter, p. 72, 92, 97; Nicole Swannesoun, pp. 72, 92. In SSW he is listed as Nicole Unknown, with unknown gender. Nicole is a man, married to Catherine Tomasdochter, ref. Donaldson, *The Court*, (1954), 72, 92. Larner has Nicole as a female. From 1604 Mareoun Cromertie is mentioned p. 122, 136, 145. Andrew Duncane 1604 mentioned in Dalyell, *The Darker*, 521, ref. to court records 15 July 1604, and in Donaldson, *The Court* (1954), 128, court records 16 July 1604.

⁶²⁵ Dalyell, 235; Donaldson, *Court*, (1991), 25–26. Dalyell has probably got the reference to Faw's trial wrong, as he is referring to 12 August 1612, 'Rec. Ork, f. 9, 10'. According to Donaldson the trial took place in Scalloway, August 1612, ref. fos. 4v–5r. Most likely Dalyell has counted every folio page and thus come to fos. 9 and 10, so there is no doubt that is the same case.

⁶²⁶ Donaldson, *Court*, Barbara Scord/Tomasdochter, Katherine Jonesdochter and Jonet Dynneis, 38–43; SSW has Jonet Dynneis registered twice, also as Jonka Kyneis; Dalyell, *The Darker*, 378, documents Patrick Petersonee and Marjorie Ritchie.

⁶²⁷ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland; Thomas, *County*, 88–99. Marioun Pardoun's surname is also written Peblis. SSW has Peebles as her surname.

confession as dead. Fraser had been convicted as a witch, ‘whom you desyrit the devil to move her to assist you doth prove, qlk she both before and after her conviction did testiffie’.⁶²⁸ Thus the case of Fraser as well as Pardoun seems to have demonological features. The case of Marion Pardoun clearly has demonological features, as will be seen in the close-reading of the document below.

In the period 1651–70 there were no witchcraft trials. In the 1670s there were seven trials. Four of these took place in 1673.⁶²⁹ These trials were held on the same day and were linked through family relations. However, information about the cases is scarce. There were no trials during the 1680s and 1690s, but after the turn of the century five trials took place in the period 1700–10. Two trials took place in 1700, documented by *The New Statistical Account of Scotland*.⁶³⁰ Three trials took place in 1708, when three siblings were accused of witchcraft.⁶³¹ Three members of the Ratter family, Andrew, Kathren and Elizabeth Ratter, were examined before the presbytery on 9–11 June 1708 at Sandness and Walls. The presbytery asked Reverend Mr George Duncan ‘whither or not he had “caused cite” the persons suspect of witchcraft sorcery & deluding the people’.⁶³² He answered that he had commanded this family to be summoned and produced a list of witnesses. The heads of the families were called in and decided that the family should be dealt with further. The Ratter family were vagabonds, roaming from farm to farm asking for food, wool or a place to stay overnight. The charges against them were human and animal sickness and death and destruction of crops, always as a consequence of them being refused charity. The last witchcraft trial in Shetland took place in 1725, the case of Margaret Watson.⁶³³ The case will be studied in further detail below.

The sources vary considerably in length and quality. According to John H. Ballantyne and Brian Smith, Shetland has not been fortunate in the survival of its historical records, especially those that were in private hands.⁶³⁴ But the archival documents have been taken care of and several of the court books published – an impressive work of documentation of the history of the islands. The published court books are extremely valuable and in a class of their own for reliability and accuracy. Even if the entries from the first years are very brief,

⁶²⁸ Thomas, *County*, 96.

⁶²⁹ Four of them are documented in *RPC*, 3rd series, iv, p. 5. In addition, Helen Stewart’s mother is documented in Dalyell, see Larner’s *Source-Book*.

⁶³⁰ Edinburgh, 1845. The book is divided into parts according to geographical area, and for each new part the pagination starts at 1. These persons are mentioned in the Shetland part of the book, p. 60.

⁶³¹ SMA, SPR, CH2/1071/1, fos. 152–9.

⁶³² SMA, SPR, CH2/1071/1, fo. 152.

⁶³³ SMA, SPR, CH2/1071/2 fos. 300, 304, 309, 312, 315.

⁶³⁴ Ballantyne, J. H. and Smith, B. (eds.), *Shetland documents 1580–1611*, (Lerwick, 1994), xix.

the court books give valuable insights into court procedure as well as accusations and verdicts. However, the confessions – and subsequently the voices of the accused – are not possible to distinguish in the records.

When we come to 1616, the records are richer and give access to court procedures, accusations, testimonies and the contents of confessions – a completeness characterising the records that has not been seen earlier. The voices of the accused individuals are heard in the documents to a greater extent than before. Sinclair's book is a very early one, and therefore interesting. However, it comes into the same category as the *New Statistical Account of Scotland* and Dalyell's book when it comes to the documentation of witchcraft – they all mention the cases briefly, but do not have the quality of the court records. It must be mentioned that Dalyell contains footnotes with exact references to the dates and places of the trials, even if Orkney is often miswritten for Shetland.

6.3 Types of trial, verdict and sentence

The trials were local trials, held in the sheriff court. The first demonological trials in Shetland, the trials of Jonet Dynneis, Katherine Jonesdochter and Barbara Scord in 1616, were presided over by William Levingstoun, sheriff and justice depute. Patrick Stewart acted as judge during the case of Mareon Cromertie in 1604. The early cases, 1602–4, were characterised by *maleficium* and the sentences were lenient. Most often the accused person was 'dempt' to quit herself or himself with the 'saxter aithe', where six persons had to give an oath that the suspect was innocent, or with the 'laryct aithe', where two persons had to give an oath of the suspect's innocence.⁶³⁵ The application of these oaths probably remained from the old Norse laws, in which the same procedure was often used. In most cases the accused failed to quit themselves with oaths and had to pay fines, often 'ii merkis'⁶³⁶ of silver or more.

Sentences of execution are known for Jonet Dynneis, Barbara Scord and Katherine Jonesdochter in 1616, Juenit Fraser and Marion Pardoun in 1644 and Helen Stewart in 1675. This means that the serious sentences in Shetland are connected to demonological cases and that all those who are documented as having been burnt are women. In Shetland those sentenced in witchcraft cases were strangled and burnt at the gallows. The old gallows were

⁶³⁵ For instance Nicole Culsetter, 1602, and Poile Watson and his wife, 1602, failed to quit themselves with the 'saxter aithe'. Mareoun Geilsdochter, 1602, and Mareoun in Houle, 1603, failed to quit themselves with the 'larycht aithe'.

⁶³⁶ Plural of 'mark' or 'merk', a unit of weight used especially for gold and silver, equivalent to 8 oz. In Orkney and Shetland 'mark' was also used as a weight of victual, butter, oil and tallow or of an amount of butcher-flesh, equalling one twentyfourth of a lispund, ref. *DOST*.

often situated on hills near villages. One of the execution places where witches were burnt is located on the Berrie Hill near Scalloway, known from oral tradition.⁶³⁷ Brian Smith says that the gallows hills of Shetland are very old, dating from before 1300, and very local. Smith points to the centralisation of legal justice in Shetland, a change from a medieval system 'where decisions about life and death were taken in local districts and by potentates throughout the islands, to a seventeenth century one, where sentences were handed out in Scalloway'.⁶³⁸

6.4 The demonological element

The word 'witchcraft' was mentioned from the earliest cases onwards, seemingly to denote a serious crime. In the case of Poile Watson, 1602, he was given the option to quit himself with a 'saxter aithe because the action is wechtie'.⁶³⁹ He failed to quit himself with the oath and had to pay 'vi merkis silver and to underly the law thairfoir as witchcraft'.⁶⁴⁰ However, neither the Devil nor the demonic pact is mentioned in the earliest witchcraft cases in Shetland.

There was a change in the contents of Shetland witchcraft trials by 1616. During a triple trial on 2 October 1616 in Scalloway the confessions of three accused women brought to the fore a range of demonological ideas, all known from cases on the Scottish mainland: the demonic pact, the Devil's mark, the Devil's child, a promise from the Devil, sex with the Devil, 'trowis' (trolls) arising from a churchyard, casting spells on boats so that fishermen drowned. Metamorphosis was not confessed. It is remarkable that almost the same linguistic expressions that are known from the Scottish mainland were used in these cases, which suggests that these ideas had been brought to the islands and woven into the oral narratives of the common people, otherwise one could not give these detailed confessions. This assimilation can be traced in the lengthy confessions as being part of the knowledge these three women had before they entered the courtroom. It is impossible that such detailed confessions could have appeared only as a response to leading questions.

The confession of Katherine Jonesdochter documents the demonic pact, sex with the Devil, who is called the 'bowman of Hildiswick and Eschenes', the Devil's mark, power from

⁶³⁷ William Moore, Scalloway, showed me on 21 April 2007 the place where witches were burnt on Berrie Hill, information orally transferred to him from earlier generations.

⁶³⁸ Smith, B., 'Gibbets and gallows. Local rough justice in Shetland, 800–1700', paper presented at the conference 'Recent developments in North Atlantic Studies', arranged by Northern Studies and Aberdeen University, Aberdeen 13–15 April 2007.

⁶³⁹ Donaldson, *The Court* (1954), 22.

⁶⁴⁰ Donaldson, *The Court* (1954), 22.

the Devil to cause human death and to transfer sickness and death from one person to another, and a promise from the Devil that 'she sould be hable to do ony thing she desired'.⁶⁴¹ She also confessed to having seen 'trowis ryse out of the kirkyeard of Hildiswick and Holiecross Kirk of Eschenes and thet she saw them on the hill callit greinfaill at monie sindrie tymes and that they come to ony hous quhair thair wes feasting or great mirrines, and speciallie at Yule'.⁶⁴² This is the nearest one comes to a witches' meeting in the confessions this year. The bunch of 'trowis' from the churchyard to a certain extent resembles a notion closely related to ghosts, the 'Wild Hunt' or 'Furious Horde', mentioned for instance by Goodare, 'spirits of people who had died prematurely and were compelled to wander until their allotted time was up'.⁶⁴³ This notion of a horde of dead people arising from the churchyard is known also from Norway.⁶⁴⁴

The confession of Barbara Scord documents the demonic pact, keeping company with the Devil, who is called 'the bowman', mention of 'the bowmanes bairne' among her own children, getting power from the Devil to cast sickness upon human beings, taking power from the 'private member' of a man who had promised to marry her, but quit.⁶⁴⁵ In the confession of Jonet Dynneis the demonic pact is not mentioned, but 'Devilrie' is mentioned as an accusation. She is accused of having caused the drowning of two men. These three confessions complement each other with regard to a range of demonological notions and give evidence for knowledge of demonological ideas among the peasants of Shetland during the second decade of the seventeenth century. Even if the witches' meeting is hardly mentioned and metamorphosis is not mentioned there is ample evidence of demonological notions in these confessions.

The non-continuation of demonological trials in Shetland is interesting. This is the opposite of the occurrence of demonology in Finnmark, where a remote region far from the capital of Denmark-Norway experienced an intense witch-hunt with a strong demonological impact over more than five decades. The main period of witchcraft trials in Shetland, characterised by demonology, was dominated by female accused. This means that the men in the material from Shetland were not particularly focused on during the decades when demonological features are found in the sources. In several of the most serious cases, two or three female trials were linked together by denunciation. This is an indication in the direction

⁶⁴¹ Donaldson, *Court* (1991), 38.

⁶⁴² Donaldson, *Court* (1991), 39.

⁶⁴³ Goodare, 'Scottish Witchcraft in its European Context', 32.

⁶⁴⁴ 'Gongferd, feigd og spøykjeri. Framsynte folk', *Bøfferding* (1981), 54–57.

⁶⁴⁵ Donaldson, *Court* (1991), 40–1.

of the notion of collective sorcery or co-operation between witches. Not enough material exists, however, to label these linked trials as panics.

6.5 *Maleficium, healing and fairy belief*

The early cases were characterised by accusations such as the stealing of milk, and the sieve and shears. Human illness and death or animal illness and death are mentioned in most of these cases. Malefice is also mentioned in the demonological cases from 1616, suggesting that the undercurrent of traditional sorcery continued to stay alive side by side with demonological notions. Katherine Jonesdochter confessed to malefice, taking profit from bewitched milk. Barbara Scord confessed to using a thread and the bone of a dead man's finger when she performed sorcery. She caused human sickness, made a man marry her daughter and was involved in suspicious kirning of milk. Jonet Dynneis confessed to malefice, stealing of butter. She used cursing and called evil upon people, which in turn came true. For the later part of the period of the witch-hunt, malefice is again the reason for accusations. For most of the cases where information is given, malefice seems to be mentioned. The use of objects for performing sorcery and the use of charms and cursing are all well-known procedures from traditional sorcery and folk belief. John Faw, 1612, was said to have learned his art from the 'Egyptians' (gypsies).

Healing is mentioned in the Shetland witchcraft material, but to a very modest degree. Healing humans is mentioned in connection with four women, while healing animals is mentioned in connection with one woman. Midwifery is not mentioned in the Shetland cases. As a whole, there is no evidence that these aspects had an impact on the witchcraft trials in Shetland.

Fairies are not mentioned in SSW as the primary characterisation of any case, but in one case as the secondary characterisation. This is the above-mentioned case of Katherine Jonesdochter, 1616, where 'trowis' are mentioned.⁶⁴⁶ She confessed she had seen the 'trowis' rise out of the kirkyard. Trolls are known from Norwegian folklore, being small supernatural creatures living in the mountains, the forest or in the sea. They represent another world, a world we cannot see, thus resembling the fairies. But they are often evil and not connected with magic to the same extent as fairies. Trolls are most frequently presented in traditional Norwegian tales as dangerous for humans to have contact with, as they may 'fortrolle' people so that they remain for ever in the world of trolls. Trolls play a dominant role in the tales

⁶⁴⁶ In SSW this is registered as secondary characterisation of case.

collected by the folklorists Asbjørnsen and Moe, published in the 1850s.⁶⁴⁷ Another interesting figure related to the trolls is the 'hulder', a siren, beautiful in appearance, who inhabits the hills and mountains. She tempts men and might be revealed when you see a long, cow-like tail.⁶⁴⁸ What comes closest to the Scottish fairies in Norwegian folk belief is an 'alv', an elf or fairy. These figures are small and friendly and live in the hills and mountains. They are not prominent in the range of figures inhabiting the Norwegian 'otherworld'.

6.6 Social status and neighbourhood disputes

The material gives little information about marital status. At least seven women were married and one was widowed; the rest are unknown. Couples seem to have been accused in the early as well as in the late periods. Mother-daughter relationships played a part in some linked trials in the 1670s and siblings were accused in 1708.

For the Shetland material there is not enough information to say anything about socio-economic conditions for the total number of cases. An interesting motif for transferring sickness from one person to another, which probably had its root in economic relations, is mentioned by Katherine Jonesdochter. She transferred sickness from her husband to a merchant 'because he was ane stranger, rather nor ony contreyman'.⁶⁴⁹ Refused charity is also mentioned in the sources (although not to a great extent), as some of the accused were vagabonds. The later cases in particular are of this type.

Neighbourhood disputes are not mentioned as the primary characterisation of any case in SSW, but in 5 cases they are mentioned as the secondary characterisation. Although the details are not known for many of the cases due to scarce source material, the indication is that disputes between neighbours played a part during the witchcraft trials. The early cases are characterised by stealing milk and butter from neighbours. Most cases in which traditional sorcery is involved also involve neighbours or acquaintances at an early stage. So even if quarrelling and cursing are registered only as minor characterising features of the case, this was often the first step on the road to the courtroom. Having a reputation as a witch was of great importance as well. There is enough evidence in the sources to say that neighbourhood disputes had an impact on the Shetland cases, particularly in relation to the initial accusations of witchcraft in the local community.

⁶⁴⁷ Asbjørnsen, P. C. and Moe, J., *Norske Folkeeventyr* (Christiania, 1852).

⁶⁴⁸ Asbjørnsen, P. C., *Norske Huldre-Eventyr og Folkesagn*, (Christiania, 1845–8).

⁶⁴⁹ Donaldson, *Court*, (1991), 38.

6.7 Marion Pardoun alias Peblis, 1644

6.7.1 The trial

Marion Pardoun was a married woman, aged 39, living in Hillswick in North Mavis. She was married to Svend Iverson. Marion Pardoun had a servant and was apparently not a poor woman. She was well established in the community and had a reputation of knowing sorcery and healing. She had been denounced by Jonet Fraser, a woman earlier burnt for witchcraft.

As with many witchcraft cases from the Scottish mainland, the first steps to this trial were taken by the kirk. The dittay consisting of 15 points was first signed by the moderator and the other brethren of the presbytery of Shetland on 15 March 1644. Then the document continues, recording the additional interrogation and waking of Marion Pardoun. It was handed over to the legal officials in Scalloway on 21 March. The same day, procurator fiscal James Gray desired that Marion Pardoun and Margareth Guthrumsdochter should be accused and the dittay put to the trial of an assize. The trial document of Margareth Guthrumsdochter has been lost. The dittay of Marion Pardoun's case contains a detailed rendering of the 15 points of accusation, in addition to brief comments in the margin, denoting what the accused person had confessed to. The moderator and the brethren of the presbytery declare that they, 'having examined the doun wreattin proces, *doe find and declare the poyntis formar markit in the margine being lawfullie provin to be witchcraft*'.⁶⁵⁰ [My italics.] The itemising seems to have structured the interrogation. The comments in the margin provide important information related to the voice of the accused as well as the voices of the witnesses.

The 15 points consist of a range of accusations dealing mainly with spell-casting causing human sickness and animal sickness and death. There is one case of spell-casting causing sickness and the sick person recovering afterwards, after having drawn blood from Marion Pardoun. In total these accusations cannot be considered as very dangerous, because they do not contain accusations of human death. It is therefore of interest to notice that the interrogation continued after 15 March, in a more serious manner, when torture in the form of waking was documented. The underlying motive seems to have been to make Marion Pardoun confess to the overturning of a boat, resulting in the death of four people. In addition to the testimony of a living person, the declaration of Jonet Fraser, burnt for witchcraft, was brought forth and recited on this occasion. When the drowned people were found, Marion Pardoun and her husband Svend were called for and asked to lay hands on the dead. This they did, with

⁶⁵⁰ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland. I would like to thank Brian Smith for letting me use his transcription of the document.

the result that blood issued from the dead bodies,⁶⁵¹ something argued by the interrogators to be a proof of murder. Marion Pardoun's reputation as a charmer and deceiver is underlined, and in addition she was said to be 'ane covenanter, consuler and convener with the devil', a figure who had been observed in several likenesses in company with her.

The presbytery found 'the pairtie guiltie, worthie of death, be the law of God and the law of the kingdome, and requyris yow judgeis to put them to the [inquest *deleted*] knowledge of ane assyse'.⁶⁵² On 21 March 1644 James Gray, procurator fiscal, desired the dittays of Marion Pardoun and Margareth Guthrumsdochter to be put to the trial of an assize. After having examined the dittay of Marion Pardoun, the assize found all the points of the dittay, except two, proven. The death sentence fell in Scalloway on 22 March 1644.

6.7.2 The discourse

As the discourse in this document is like a monologue from the accuser, this is not a text in which we find a narrator functioning in the ordinary way in third person narration. The Marion Pardoun document displays a drama performed on a stage, an 'I' talking to a 'you' – a discourse situation frequently found in Scottish witchcraft trial documents. The accused woman is spoken to in the second person: 'ye rank witch', 'which ye cannot deny'. The effect of the use of second-person address is to give the discourse an accusatory tone. This discourse situation gives access only to a certain extent to what the accused person is really saying, as the traces of her confession are either rendered through the discourse of the interrogators or found in comments in the margin. By close-reading of the document it is, however, possible to establish parts of Marion Pardoun's confession and to put these parts together along a timeline to reconstruct a narrative.

Similarly it is hard to distinguish the voices of the witnesses from the voices of the interrogators. Nevertheless it is possible, by a retrospective reading, to reconstruct the voices of the witnesses, either from comments in the margin or as they are heard in the sections of the document rendering the accusations. From a narratological perspective it is of interest that each of the rendered accusations represents a sliding transition from second person over to third person. The sections start with the addressing of the accused person – 'ye are indyttit and accusit for' – but soon go over to third-person narration, which is required when the circumstances related to the accusation are retold. The endings of the several sections are varied repetitions of the same underlying expression, such as 'quhilk ye rank witch can not

⁶⁵¹ The ordeal-like test known as bierricht.

⁶⁵² Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

deny' or 'quhilk ye cannot deny' or 'thereby showing and proveing your said devilish practise of the art of witchcraft'.⁶⁵³ Thus there is an oscillation in the mode of discourse throughout the whole document, which makes a narratological approach rewarding.

The voice of the law comes to the fore distinctly in the sections dealing with verdict and sentence, but also in the dittay, especially through the repetitive use of words and expressions denoting the devilish and malicious intention of Marion Pardoun's practice.

6.7.3 The voice of the law

The voice of the law is in large parts of the document heard through fixed phrases, by which legal discourse penetrates the clergy's discourse. The dittay was sent to a jury for final examination, and in the final section of the document, the verdict and the sentence, pure legal discourse is heard. According to provenance, it is a legal document.

In the opening passage of the document the voice of the law is already heard, in a general accusation clearly influenced by demonological discourse. In the following section it is not difficult to hear the echo of fixed formulas used within the rhetoric of the witch-hunters:

In the first, the said Mareoun Peblis alias Pardone is indyttit and accusit for the fearful and damnable renunceing of God, your faith and baptisme, giveing and casting of your selff, bodie and saull, in the hands of the devill, following, exerceing, using and practiseing the fearfull and damnable craft of witchcraft, sorcerie and charmeing.⁶⁵⁴

The last phrase is interesting. Charming was usually separate from witchcraft, but in the 1640s the church tried to get it included. The accusations above were frequently mentioned in witchcraft trials in connection with the ritual of the demonic pact. As will be seen, the Marion Pardoun document does not show that she confessed to the demonic pact by going through a ritual. She did not promise the Evil One her service. Nevertheless, the contradiction between being a child of God and being a child of the Devil is emphasised in the dittay, as is seen in the frequent mentioning of this theme: 'your said divilish and wicked craft of witchcraft, tormenting and abuseing thairby of poore waik christianes, Goddis people, aganes quhom ye carie evill will and malice, quhilk ye, rank witch, cannot deny'.⁶⁵⁵ Even if the document of Marion Pardoun does not provide a demonological confession, it seems to represent a stage of awareness among the witch-hunters about what phrases should be expressed during a witchcraft hearing.

⁶⁵³ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

⁶⁵⁴ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

⁶⁵⁵ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

Amidst the spectrum of words often interwoven in this text, the frequent mentioning of 'devil' and 'devillish' tops the list. And this literary device of repetition is used with success. When the words 'devil' and 'devillish' are mentioned about 40 times in a document of eight pages, always connected to Marion Pardoun's name or her activities, one gets an overwhelming feeling that she is a person tied up with the Evil One. This repetitive method functions almost as a kind of brainwashing because of the machine-like way in which it is presented. And there is no doubt that, in the eyes of the interrogators, she is supposed to be one of the Devil's servants on earth.

Another instance of words and expressions from previous witchcraft trials apparently entering the vocabulary of the witch-hunters as well as that of the common people is a kind of 'contamination', whereby expressions used during demonic pact confessions are found used in a context other than the demonic pact. The first time it occurs is in connection with a spell Marion Pardoun allegedly threw upon James Halcro. He had a terrible sickness and was 'tormentit thairby *fra the croun of his head to the sole of his fute*, that thair wes no lyff expectit of him'.⁶⁵⁶ [*My italics.*] The other example is related to the same accusation. Marion Pardoun had been sent for and was begged to lay her hands upon the sick James Halcro and he 'felt and fand his pane and diseas to desolve, *fra the croun of his head to the sole of his fute*'.⁶⁵⁷ [*My italics.*] Usually this formulation was related to the demonic pact. The person entering the pact stood in a special position, symbolising that the whole body from then onwards would be in the service of the Devil. Actually the formulation came from popular belief. Both these examples show that demonological rhetoric was well known among legal officials and among the common people in Shetland by the 1640s. In this case the expression most likely came from those witnesses who testified about James Halcro's disease, and what we read in the dittay is a rendering of this testimony. However, it is also possible that the interrogators might have inserted this expression into the dittay. In any case, the expression here is taken out of its demonic pact context and used to describe the intensity of a sick man's pains. Thus an echo of the demonological witchcraft confessions from mainland Scotland is found in the northern Isles in 1644, the expression in itself semantically unchanged, but with a different interpretation because it is used in a context other than that of a demonological confession. This means that even if demonic pact confessions were not common in Shetland, demonological ideas were well known on these islands in the mid-seventeenth century. The

⁶⁵⁶ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

⁶⁵⁷ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

expression 'fra the croun of his head to the sole of his fute' was not used in the 1616 Scalloway witchcraft trials, even if these trials contained demonological confessions. However, the expression was frequently used on mainland Scotland. When we find this 'standard expression' used in Marion Pardoun's case related to *maleficium*, it appears that phrases from demonological thought on the Scottish mainland have entered the sphere of traditional sorcery in Shetland.

The jury consisted of 15 individuals. It should be noted that in the assize we find the two people who were waking Marion Pardoun; Mans Finlaysone in Burraland and Jon Erasmussone in Enisfirth. Another member of the assize was Andro Smyth, younger, in Hildiswik who, according to point 7 in the dittay, accused Marion Pardoun of casting a spell on his cow, so that it gave nothing but water. There is a comment related to the mandate of the jury:

The assyse being ressaveit, sworne and admittit, and efter reiding of the dittayis and examinatioun of the pannalls thairupoun, and heaveing ressaveit the depositiounes of divers famous witnesses, quha wer suorne tutching the saids dittayis, proveing them, *as lykwayis in consideratioun of the confessiounes and circumstances markit and set down in and upon the saids dittayis, they passing out of judgement and reviseing the saids dittayis*, togidder with the saids depositions of witnesses.⁶⁵⁸ [My italics.]

My interpretation of the quotation above is that it was necessary to be cautious because several of the assize have been active during the phrase of accusation. Ola Mansone of Ilisbrucht, member of the assize, was nominated as chancellor. The two women on trial, Marion Pardoun and Margareth Guthrumsdochter, were handed the same verdict. The jury did not find two of the dittay points proved. This indicates that the various points of accusation were discussed and decided upon. The sentence was passed on 22 March: 'The judgis adjudges and decernis the pannalls to be takin be the lockman to the place of executioun, to the west hill of Berrie, and thair wyryt at ane staik and brunt in ashes, betuix 1 and 2 efter none, quhilk Andro Chappie, dempster, gave for dome'.⁶⁵⁹ The voice of the law is a concise and determinative one. It does not seem to permit any doubt about the final fate of the two women.

6.7.4 The voices of the witnesses

From the comments in the margin related to the 15 points of accusation it is possible to reconstruct some of the testimonies of the witnesses. One point deals with the accusation of Madda Scudda, now the servant of Johne, formerly the servant of Marion Pardoun. She

⁶⁵⁸ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

⁶⁵⁹ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

accused Marion Pardoun of being the cause of ‘a fearful madness and sickness’ cast upon her, ‘becaus sho wald not byd with yow’,

quhairin sho continewit most terriblie tormentit, and throw the torment of the said diseas sho wes caryit many tymes to run upon hir awin sister that keipit hir, and divers utheris, to have devorit them in hir madnes, and sa continewit a yeir and half ane yeir, till sho, *being counsallit be the nyctbouris of Hildiswik, ran upon yow the said Marioun, and drew blood of yow, in James halcrois hous, bytting tua of your fingers till they bled, quhairupon thairefter the said Madda Scudda recoverit of hir diseas, and cam to hir rycht sences.*⁶⁶⁰ [*My italics.*]

This is a retelling of the disease story of Madda Scudda, structured along the lines of linearity and causality. Madda Scudda’s testimony is a strong one, as she has experienced the spell-casting herself. In the margin this comment is written: ‘5 witchcraft/confessit Jhones mid⁶⁶¹ and that sho run on hir and thairefter wes weill/fyllis *in margin*’. This piece of information, that the maid ran on Marion and afterwards recovered from her disease, is repeated in the running text of the dittay. This testimony includes other witnesses, for instance those who stayed in James Halcro’s house when Madda Scudda ran on Marion Pardoun and bit her. And it seems clear that the neighbours, who knew Marion Pardoun’s reputation as a witch, were following Madda Scudda’s disease and gave her advice on how to get rid of the spell. People in the village must have feared Marioun Pardoun’s activities. After the sudden recovery of a very sick person ‘quhilk sudden recoverie, togidder with your forme and maner of charmeing and cureing of be your said tutche and charmes, being spred abroad among the nyctbours, and the same cuming to your earis (...)’.⁶⁶² Then Marion Pardoun again cast a spell on the person, and she had to be begged to come to him, when she transferred the sickness to a cow. There is no doubt that the neighbours believed that she was the only one who could take away a spell she had cast. It also seems that even if the neighbours feared her, they were impressed by her activities. References to the neighbours’ reactions to the amazing practices of Marion Pardoun may be followed through the whole document: either Eduard Halcro was saved from peril ‘to the admiratioun of all the beholderis’ or a healing hand managed to make blood run from a dead body ‘to the greit admiratioun of the beholderis’.

The first point of the accusations against Marion Pardoun had to do with Jonet Robertson’s sudden sickness: ‘ye cust seiknes upon the said Jonet, quha imediatlie upon your departure fell in ane extraordiner and unkyndlie seiknes, and lay aught [*dayis deleted*]

⁶⁶⁰ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

⁶⁶¹ Means ‘maid’.

⁶⁶² Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

weikis'.⁶⁶³ The recovery of Jonet Robertson was even more remarkable than that of Madda Scudda. John Banks, her husband, came to Marion Pardoun and threatened her, whereupon she gave him 'a gulyeoun of silver to hold his peace' and promised him that nothing should ail his wife

and thairefter for that ye sent hir ane cheis of the breid of anes looffe,⁶⁶⁴ composed by your said devilish airt of witchcraft, with ane Jonka Rolland, desyring the said Jonet to eat the same, *quhen (tho the said Jonet refusit to eat) yit immediatlie thairefter grew weill*, bot tua of hir kyne died, the said seiknes being castin upon them be your said wicked and devilish airt of witchcraft.⁶⁶⁵ [*My italics.*]

There is no connection between the eating of bread and Jonet's recovery, as she refused to eat the loaf. Nevertheless, the argumentation continues as if there really was reason to believe that the loaf of bread had caused Jonet Robertson's recovery, as seen by the words 'yit immediatlie thairefter' – the recovery comes after the request to eat. This indicates that the interrogators are to a certain extent 'deaf' when unexpected information turns up, information which threatens to overthrow their way of arguing. They ignore the significance of the information which does not fit in with their intention and continue their argumentation along the same lines as usual.

The voices of the witnesses contribute greatly to the accuracy and logic of the text, which was necessary when a convincing argumentation about the effects of Marion Pardoun's spells was presented. Being careful to establish a timeline, the witnesses give information about how many hours, days, weeks and years might have gone between a quarrel and the consequence of that quarrel, namely a sudden sickness or death. Thus a chain of events is created and a logical explanation made possible.

Some of the alleged spell-castings are dated in occurrence to a few years ago: both 1641 and 1642 are mentioned. But some of the spells were perhaps cast a long time ago, and the year is left open, as in point 10: 'Item, ye the said Marioun is indyttit and accusit for that [*blank*] yeris syne ye being suspected to have cassin seiknes upon the said Andro Smyth elder his mother, quhairof sho lay long benume and sensles'.⁶⁶⁶ Andro Smith, elder, pursued three of the accusations against Marion Pardoun, and it seems clear that some families in the village were much more eager to accuse than others.

⁶⁶³ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

⁶⁶⁴ Means a piece of bread.

⁶⁶⁵ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

⁶⁶⁶ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

The voices of the witnesses often reveal motives for casting spells. It seems that everyday disagreements about pasture and animals were often the starting points of an accusation of spell-casting. Sometimes a detail might be reason enough for casting a spell on a cow: 'James Halcro in Hildiswick haveing a kow *that he alledged haid pushed a kow of yours*, ye in revenge thairof, be your said divilish airt of witchcraft, maid the said James his kow milk nothing but blood, quhairas your awin kow had no harme in hir milk'.⁶⁶⁷ [*My italics.*]

The word 'devil' is mentioned only twice in the discourse of the witnesses. The word is used once by Andro Brown, who had words with Marion Pardoun's husband Svend as they were casting peat. The other place where the word 'devil' is used in the witnesses' discourse is in quotations from the declaration of the burnt witch, Jonet Fraser. This declaration was used to testify that Marion Pardoun performed sorcery, in claims that Marion Pardoun had asked Jonet Fraser for assistance when she planned to sink a boat. So we have the situation that although Marion Pardoun does not confess to the demonic pact, shape-shifting is mentioned in this document and used in arguing Pardoun's guilt in connection with a shipwreck. Four people drowned 'rycht at the shore quhair thair wes na danger utherwayes, nor hazard to have cassin thame away, it being sick fair wedder'.⁶⁶⁸ One of them was Eduard Halcro, a person against whom Marion Pardoun allegedly bore 'ane deadlie and veneficall'⁶⁶⁹ malice in your heart'. As sorcery operations were often combined with practical choices of shape, the overturning of boats was often connected with whales or seals, as here: 'be your said wicked, detestable, abhominable and divilish airt of witchcraft, being transformed in the lyknes of ane pellock quhaill (...) ye did cum under the said boat and overturne hir with thame, and drowned and devoirit thame in the sey'.⁶⁷⁰ After the drowned people were found, Marion Pardoun was asked to come to lay her hands on them, and 'dayis efter the said death and away casting, quhen all thair bluid wes evanished and disolveit frome any naturall course or caus to ishue and rune, the said [umquhill *underlined*] Eduard bled at the coller bane or craig'⁶⁷¹ bane'.⁶⁷² The interrogators took the incident as a sign of 'revilatioun of the judgement of the almytie' and called her a murderer.

⁶⁶⁷ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

⁶⁶⁸ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

⁶⁶⁹ From Latin *veneficium*, meaning poison or witchcraft.

⁶⁷⁰ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

⁶⁷¹ 'craig' means neck.

The voices of the witnesses, as they come to the fore in this document, are most interesting. They tell us a lot about the common people's beliefs in a time period long before folklore was written down. Among other notions a type of sorcery which involved tying knots in a rope or a piece of cloth to get wind was mentioned. Untying the knots produced wind. Thus this material is a valuable source for knowledge of folk tradition. The testimonies also tell us about the common people's way of thinking and of reasoning, which makes the document a rich source for the study of the history of mentalities. And of course the voices of the witnesses make it possible to understand the complexity of witchcraft accusations. The testimonies show that the common people knew about the Devil and the demonic pact, and they knew about wind magic. This type of sorcery is also known from the Sami tradition in northern Norway, described by Olaus Magnus in his history book.⁶⁷³ It is interesting, however, that in this case it is the Devil who was supposed to loosen the knot, not the sorcerer himself, as the Sami tradition denotes. It seems here to be a blurred border between the common people's retelling of the art of loosing knots to make wind and the tradition as it is known in Norway. This indicates that in orally transmitted tales about the art of sorcery and the role of the Devil, variations might be traced as the notions travel from one country to another.

6.7.5 The voice of the accused person

A distinct feature of the whole document is the disruption of the coherence of the accused person's statements as the days pass. Following the first minutes signed by the brethren of the presbytery on 15 March, the interrogation apparently continued. Marginal comments seem to contain remnants of what she was in fact confessing: 'fyllis/witchcraft/confest ane tyme sho pat hir finger to ...hir.../confest hir ... in judgement and cursit him .../ Item, confest sho sent the bannok *in margin*'.⁶⁷⁴ These seem to be used as key-words for the complete text of the document. Afterwards, the whole situation is rendered in detail about her quarrelling with Andro Broun and cursing him, whereupon he fell sick; about her laying hands on Andro Broun, putting her finger on his leg; about her sending her husband with a bannock to Andro Brown with the result that the sickness left him and was cast upon a cow. An escalating tendency can be traced: the greater the pressure put on Marion Pardoun, the less coherent the text. This apparently has to do with the waking of Marion Pardoun and her disrupted state of mind. At the end, she is clearly out of her mind: 'Provin also be Mans Finlasone and [*torn*]

⁶⁷² Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

⁶⁷³ Magnus, *Historia om de nordiska folken*, 159.

⁶⁷⁴ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

Erasmusone quhen they wer waking hir sho speirit quhair the husband wes quha ansering hir speking concerning hir husbound sho ans writ he lay under hir heid and wald not suffer hir to confess *in margin*'.⁶⁷⁵

In addition to the parts of her confession rendered as fragments of sentences in the margin of the document, the voice of the accused person is rendered as indirect speech in the discourse of the witnesses. There is no doubt that Marion Pardoun had cursed other persons. When rumours about the recovery of Andro Broun within 14 days were spread among the neighbours as the result of her charming and curing him, she got angry: 'ye said to the nychtbouris unhoall⁶⁷⁶ on them that haid bewitched yow'.⁶⁷⁷ This suggests that Marion Pardoun was afraid of rumours spread about her use of charms, and the result was that 'imediatlíe agane he fell again in the said seiknes, wors then befoir'.⁶⁷⁸ The threat of rumours about the reputation of sorcery seems to have been consistent in Shetland around the mid-seventeenth century.

The case of Marion Pardoun is in an intermediate position between a demonological confession and a confession rooted in traditional sorcery. Most often confessions containing the element of shape-shifting are related to witches' meetings or collective sorcery operations. Even if the case of Marion Pardoun does not contain a clear demonological confession, the element of shape-shifting is documented. Her case illustrates the pragmatic element in shape-shifting, seen also in documents from Finnmark, 'being transformed in the lyknes of ane pellock quhaill'.⁶⁷⁹ The choice of shape was appropriate to the actual situation in which the sorcery operation was to be performed; a sorcery operation at sea required the evil-doer to be in the shape of a whale or a bird, making it possible to master the surroundings. This shows a practical attitude to life and points to the connection between the content of the women's confessions and their own experiences, culture and environment. Even if the narrative conveyed in the confession is fantastic, the setting of the story is realistic. The imagery is related to the maritime society.

Relations to other women, as they come forth in this document, seem to go in both positive and negative directions. Other women might be a threat because of their potential to

⁶⁷⁵ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

⁶⁷⁶ 'unhoall' means bad luck.

⁶⁷⁷ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

⁶⁷⁸ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

⁶⁷⁹ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

denounce a person for witchcraft. But there is also an indication that loyalty to other women is at work, for instance when Marion Pardoun gave her motive for taking away sickness from a man, 'anwerit that it wes not for his gud bot for Helen Clousta his spous good that he wes saved'.⁶⁸⁰

6.7.6 The voice of the scribe

The scribe gives some 'hidden' pieces of information both in the marginal comments mentioned above and in comments in brackets. The information that Marion Pardoun was tortured, kept awake by two men, Mans Finlaysone in Burraland⁶⁸¹ and Jon Erasmussone in Enisfirth, is such a comment, inserted in the document after the signing of the dittay by the moderator Nicol Whyte and the clerk M. Robert Murray. Both Mans Finlaysone and Jon Erasmussone were in the jury when Marion Pardoun and Margaret Guthrumsdochter were given their sentences.

The voice of the scribe is heard particularly through the text's repetitive demonological phrases. An understanding of Marion Pardoun's sorcery activity in relation to the Devil, thus leaving her God and Christian faith, is superimposed on her by male questioners, and this becomes very distinct in the document. The whole rhetorical apparatus of condemning a fallen woman because she is an enemy of God and has given herself to the Devil is used repeatedly, almost like an exorcism. The arguments for condemning her come from the witch-hunters. Even if this is no demonic pact confession, it seems as if they interpret her deeds in the same way as if she had confessed to the demonic pact – and judge accordingly. The use of the phrase 'fra the croun of his head to the sole of his fute' is taken from the sphere of demonology and used in relation to traditional sorcery. This aspect of the text is taken good care of by the narrator, hammering and hammering on the same expressions, an indication that the text itself reveals important ideological attitudes on the part of the interrogators.

Another important narratological feature of this text, as well as of witchcraft narratives in general, is the logic imposed on the document by the use of linearity and cause-effect relations. An efficient use of these textual elements, taken care of by the scribe, makes it possible to establish the story structure of a document in which the discourse situation is originally like a drama on the stage, where most of the text is a monologue directed at the

⁶⁸⁰ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

⁶⁸¹ According to Ballantyne, J. H. and Smith, B., *Shetland*, Burraland was a large farm, listed in 1589 with 12 marks land, p. 68. Burrowland in 1610 is listed with 6½ marks land, 8 pennies in the mark, p. 247.

accused person. The cause-effect relation is established, for instance, to 'prove' the effect of a charm. Linearity is established by placing events one after another along a timeline, being very careful with information about what came first and what came last. The professional way in which the scribe mastered the cause-effect relation as well as linearity in his writing are exemplified in the following sentence, which describes what happened after Marion Pardoun had cured a woman: 'quhairupoun by your said divilish witchcraft the said seiknes wes taken af the said Marjorie, and castin upon a young kow of the said Jones, quhilk took woddrome⁶⁸² and died within 24 hours thairefter, quhilk ye can not deny'.⁶⁸³ In the quoted sentence the cause-effect relation is emphasised through the logical explanation of how the sickness was taken from Marjorie and cast upon Jones's cow, which consequently died. Likewise linearity is underlined by the mentioning of the exact number of hours it took from the cow became sick till it died. By making use of these literary devices, the scribe strengthens the argument that Marion Pardoun was to blame for the cow's death.

The range of the scribe's accents is wide. Sometimes it is possible to hear the voice of the scribe through inserted comments, such as the following: when Marion had put Eduard Halcro's life in danger by loosening some stones on his path, he was 'yit saved to the admiratioun of all the beholderis'.⁶⁸⁴ The scribe's accent is almost a humorous one. Another accent that is rather unexpected is a poetic one, as seen in the image 'cloithing your spirit with in the said quhaill'. Such images used in the witchcraft documents show that, in spite of all expectations, witchcraft documents echo expressions used in preaching from the Old Testament, and may contain beauty and poetry.

6.8 Margaret Watson, 1725

The 1670s was a decade with seven cases, 4 in 1673, 1 in 1674 and 2 in 1675. Among these was a sorcerer, Magnus Laurensen in Gonfirth, brought before the court in 1674. He had been suspected as a sorcerer for a long time. The end of his case is not known.

The last cases in Shetland took place in 1708 and 1725; the Ratter family in 1708 and Margaret Watson in 1724–5.⁶⁸⁵ Watson was first brought before the presbytery in Sandness in

⁶⁸² 'Wod(e)nes' means madness, insanity, ref. *DOST*, 12 vols., xii, 280, 'wodrome' and 'woddram' are variants of the same word. Another explanation might be 'vomm', explained by Jakobsen as 'injury inflicted upon a person by hypnotizing influence or magic power; to kast a v. ower ane; more common forms 'vam' and 'vamm'.'

⁶⁸³ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

⁶⁸⁴ Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland.

⁶⁸⁵ I would like to thank Diane Baptie for the transcription of the document.

1708 together with the Ratter family. Her name was recorded again at Southerhous in Delting on 30 September 1724 and at Olnafirth on 3 March, 26 May, 30 June and 29 September 1725. Like the Ratter family she was a vagabond, and apparently came into conflict with people and cursed them when she was refused lodgings or food. She was first brought before the court 'suspected of witchcraft & deluding the people being se[ver]all tymes before the Session of Sandness and convicted of gross & continuall cursing & impreca[tio]ns Being interrogat by the Session anent the report passed on her of being a witch'.⁶⁸⁶ She answered them 'how could she be a witch and not know of it and affirmed as is clear by the Session process and by the Testimony of all the Inhabitants of Sandness th[a]t she did and would curse when she was prejudged or wronged by any'.⁶⁸⁷ The only testimony against her was an episode of cursing after a refusal of lodging. The night after 'the goodwife of the house was almost out of her witts w[i]th fearfull dream & visions'.⁶⁸⁸ Margaret Watson denied continually that she was a witch, but admitted she did curse. The way the word 'witch' is used in this case is not related to demonology. The end of the case in the year 1708 was that the presbytery 'thought fitt to call the heads of families to enquire par[ticu]larly at them anent this womans life & conversa[tio]n who all declared she was a great curser'.⁶⁸⁹

The kirk session of Southerhouse at Delting in 1724 has a reference from Sandness about Margaret Watson. She is said to be a resident in Sandness and mentioned as an 'alledg'd witch'.⁶⁹⁰ Her case should be laid before the Civil Magistrate by 'Mr Geo: Duncan M[inist]r of Sandness'.⁶⁹¹ When her case came up again four times in 1725 at Olnafirth, she was mentioned as 'alledged guilty of witchcraft', 'alleadged a witch', 'alleadged witch' and 'alleadged witch'. But in spite of several reports from the kirk, the legal authorities were passive. On 30 June 1725 the minister reported 'that he Laid the Process before the Stewart but gott no answer'.⁶⁹² And on 29 September 'the Stewart reports that he had consider'd the Sessions Reference and found nothing therein that could infer that Crime against her, But that she is a Deluder of the people and that he intended to proceed against her as such'.⁶⁹³ The term 'a Deluder of the people' must refer to her cursing, as she did not confess to witchcraft. The quotation could be interpreted as indicating that Margaret Watson misled people by

⁶⁸⁶ SMA, SPR, CH2/1071/1, p. 155.

⁶⁸⁷ SMA, SPR, CH2/1071/1, p. 155.

⁶⁸⁸ SMA, SPR, CH2/1071/1, p. 156.

⁶⁸⁹ SMA, SPR, CH2/1071/1, p. 156.

⁶⁹⁰ SMA, SPR, CH2/1071/2, p. 300.

⁶⁹¹ SMA, SPR, CH2/1071/2, p. 300.

⁶⁹² SMA, SPR, CH2/1071/2, p. 312.

⁶⁹³ SMA, SPR, CH2/1071/2, p. 315.

trying to make them believe that cursing had an effect. However, this could not be considered a crime.

This last case in Shetland shows clearly the change in climate since the mid-seventeenth century. The fear of 'devillish' witchcraft on the part of the witch-hunters has disappeared. The words 'witch' and 'witchcraft' are still used by the kirk, but these words do not elicit any response from the accused, from the heads of the families assembled, or from Stewart. They all maintain that Margaret Watson is not a witch. The Devil is no longer mentioned and whatever threat Margaret Watson might have been to the communities in which she stayed due to her cursing, in 1725 this threat was not regarded as dangerous by the legal authorities. The repeated attempts by the kirk to revive her case might be a sign of irritation with this continually cursing individual, but in my opinion this is not a sign of fear of an evil-doer of great calibre. Fear, which is a very strong feeling, could not be raised on the part of the legal officials towards this rather harmless woman. In this respect, the voice of the law had the last word. Brian P. Levack says that an explanation of the decline of European witchcraft prosecutions in philosophical terms is highly problematic: 'The main problem is that the expression of sceptical ideas, especially those that denied the possibility of the crime of witchcraft, either had little impact among the intellectual elite or took place after witchcraft prosecutions had already begun to wane.'⁶⁹⁴ The last seems to be the case in Shetland, but it is also important to note that judicial scepticism was a fact earlier than scepticism on the part of the kirk.

6.9 Conclusion

In Shetland the witchcraft trials by and large follow the same pattern that we know from several other regions, for instance Orkney. The early cases were characterised by accusations such as the stealing of milk and the sieve and shears – a recognised method of divining (for instance) the whereabouts of stolen or lost goods.⁶⁹⁵ There seems to have been a harsher climate as regards the persecution of witches in 1616, when 5 cases occurred. The pattern of 2 cases in 1644, 4 cases in 1673, 1 case in 1674 and 2 cases in 1675 gives evidence for an interpretation that fear of witches existed and that witchcraft was criminalised on a modest scale throughout the century. However, one has to bear in mind that sources might be missing from this middle period. The ending of witchcraft cases in Shetland was dominated by

⁶⁹⁴ Levack, B. P., 'The decline and end of Scottish witch-hunting' in Goodare, ed., *Scottish witch-hunt in context*, 167.

⁶⁹⁵ Definition Donaldson, *The Court*, (1954), 128. Also discussed in Thomas, *County*, 160–5.

traditional sorcery. Even though witchcraft trials continued to 1725, the cases in the late period were few and far between. It is interesting to note the change in court procedure from the earliest cases to 1616, a development showing that influence from Norse law (exemplified in the early cases by 'sixter aithe' and 'larych aithe') gave way to a court procedure similar to that of mainland Scotland. Therefore it might be that the abolition of Norse laws in 1611 influenced the witchcraft trials in the years to follow. In the 1616 trials formulations in the court records clearly give evidence that the Witchcraft Act was used. This holds true for the opening phrases of the trials, for 'certain points of witchcraft, sorcery and deceiving the people' as well as for the sentence, in which the same formulation as is known from elsewhere can be read, where the sentenced persons were to be 'tane by the lockmane to the place of execution abone Berrie useit and wount efter none and thair to be wirryet at ane staik quhill they be dead and thairefter to be brunt in ashes'.⁶⁹⁶ On linguistic grounds this argument also holds true for the frequent repetition of words related to 'devil' in the court records from 1616 onwards.

It is interesting to note that demonological ideas seem to enter the mentality sphere of Orkney and Shetland in a similar fashion. The three trials from 1616 show a new climate in witchcraft belief in Shetland. The confessions of Katherine Jonesdochter and Barbara Scord in particular reveal both new ideas about the demonic pact and old folk belief in spirits dangerous for humans to see. The covenant with the Devil and the witches' mark, side by side with the idea of transferring disease and spirits rising from the churchyard, illustrate a weaving together of old and new ideas of sorcery, which seems to have taken place in Shetland around 1600.⁶⁹⁷ If learned ideas of demonology were introduced to the northern islands by Scottish legal officials, this seems to correspond with such ideas having been activated on the Scottish mainland during the witchcraft panics of the 1590s. If the kirk was active in spreading demonological ideas, the restoration of the bishopric may have been influential. It seems clear that the presbytery played an important part in the interrogation of Marion Pardoun, 1644, where detailed documents have survived to document the procedure of the case.

The politically unstable situation in Orkney related to the deaths of two generations of Stewarts might have had an influence in Shetland as well, and have contributed to the 1616 cases. However, as these turbulent historical events were geographically most closely related

⁶⁹⁶ Donaldson, *Court*, (1991), 38, 43.

⁶⁹⁷ The notion of spirits arising from churchyards resemble Norwegian folk belief, 'gangferd', a crowd of dead persons flying from the churchyard, 'Gongferd, feigdd og spøykjeri. Framsynte folk', *Bøfferding*, (1981), 54–7.

to Orkney, it is likely that the consequences there were more marked than in Shetland. It should also be noted that fewer sheriff courts were held in Shetland than in Orkney. The sederunts documented for Orkney and Shetland for the period 1614–15 show that the court had nine sessions altogether in Shetland in June, August, September and October 1615, while during 1614–15 it had thirteen sessions in Orkney.⁶⁹⁸ This points to the fact that in Shetland witchcraft accusations were not always dealt with immediately before the legal apparatus, but had to wait until the courts were held, thus possibly contributing to calming the pressure for trials and lessening the occurrence of trials. Political unrest related to the 1643 events, which had consequences for the northern islands as discussed in the Orkney chapter, might have had some influence in Shetland, as the 1644 trials were of a serious kind. However, the lack of surviving sources is once again a factor to be borne in mind, as the primary document of one of the 1644 cases is missing and no other sources from the period can complete the picture.

Hostile relations within the local community at the very outset of the witchcraft trials seem to play a role whenever the sources are detailed enough to reveal this type of evidence. As regards witchcraft suspicions and accusations, the importance of disagreements within social networks in the local communities is illustrated in the brief entries of the early cases as well as in the more detailed cases from 1616 and 1644. Whether a person was reputed to be a witch was used as a point during the passing of the verdict and sentence, as can be seen in the triple trial from 1616, in which it was recorded that ‘the said Jonka and Barbaray are “bruitit” as common witches’.⁶⁹⁹ However, as was seen also from the Scottish mainland and from Orkney, the seriousness of the cases treated by the legal authorities suddenly increased enormously once the demonological confessions had been obtained. Accused persons might have reputation for knowing sorcery, but for witchcraft as a crime the decisive point with regard to the severity of a case was the demonological element.

If influence from Norway existed during the Shetland witchcraft trials, I would suggest that this influence came from the western and the southern parts of Norway. In these regions demonological witchcraft trials did not get any particular foothold and the cases were mainly characterised by traditional folk belief.⁷⁰⁰ The distance between Shetland and Bergen is very short. It has to be noted that the connection between the lawman of Shetland and the lawman of Bergen and Gulathing was close. Judgements from the Shetland lawthing could be brought before the king’s court in Bergen for confirmation, and may be traced as late as

⁶⁹⁸ Barclay, ‘Introduction’, xxiii.

⁶⁹⁹ Donaldsen, *Court*, (1991), 42.

⁷⁰⁰ Næss, Botnheim, Knutsen.

1538.⁷⁰¹ Thus a degree of influence from the west of Norway on communications related to law decisions in general in Shetland might be possible in the sixteenth century. It is interesting to note that two days after a sentence was passed in Oslo by the viceroy and the Norwegian council on 22 November 1507, the viceroy, Christian II, ‘published his confirmation of all the laws of King Håkon V, and decreed that they were to be observed “in the whole kingdom of Norway and lands under the crown of Norway, even Iceland, Shetland and Faroe as in other places here in Norway”’.⁷⁰² Robberstad maintains that Christian II, by publishing this decree, must have thought that ‘a new king of Norway should have the power of confirming these old laws even in respect of the mortgaged land, an idea that was by no means revolutionary.’⁷⁰³ However, Scots law had taken over at the time the Shetland witchcraft trials started. It should be borne in mind that in the western and southern parts of Norway witchcraft trials took on quite a different character than the trials in Finnmark, a region which will be discussed in greater detail below.

On the whole it seems that the witchcraft trials in Shetland followed a well-known pattern as regards changes in the legal, clerical and mentality spheres. Traditional sorcery was criminalised from 1600 onwards, although with lenient sentences. Demonological notions were introduced into Shetland, but they did not gain a very strong foothold, as these ideas did not result in panics. Towards the end of the witchcraft cases, the kirk was active in accusing those who used cursing and thus represented a factor of social disorder in communities. However, the legal apparatus was not particularly interested in following up these cases.

⁷⁰¹ Robberstad, *Shetland*, 54.

⁷⁰² Robberstad, *Shetland*, 55.

⁷⁰³ Robberstad, *Shetland*, 57.

7 Finnmark

7.1 The first decades

The chief magistrate was the scribe in Finnmark district.⁷⁰⁴ He wrote down what happened in court, thus able to colour and to bring to the fore for a reader of today all the accents of the discourse.

The first two decades of witchcraft persecution in Finnmark, 1600–20, are characterized by few cases, a relatively high proportion of Sami men and cases located in West Finnmark. Of the 9 persons accused, 7 were men, 6 of them Sami. A change in the climate towards witches seems to have developed around 1620. This possibly had to do with the 1617 decree about ‘Witches and their Accomplices’,⁷⁰⁵ when demonological ideas were taken into the legal definition of witches. The first panic in Finnmark witchcraft trials was a reality in 1620–1. This was also the first legal prosecution of witchcraft after the Scotsman John Cunningham (c1575–1651) was appointed district governor of Vardøhus Len in the spring of 1619.⁷⁰⁶ During the panic of 1620–1, thirteen women were implicated. The main accusation concerned a shipwreck in 1617, when ten boats with 40 men from Kiberg and Vardø went down on the day before Christmas Day. Alleged witches were transported to Vardøhus from Kiberg, Vadsø, Big and Small Ekkerø og Vardø accused of having caused the shipwreck.⁷⁰⁷ The trial started in the fishing village of Omgang with the imprisonment of Karen Edisdatter in May 1620.⁷⁰⁸ She denounced several other women, which resulted in several imprisonments the following year. In late April 1621, Kirsten Sørensdatter from the small fishing village of Kiberg was imprisoned. Later the same year, on 9 August, a court meeting was held in Omgang, where Lisbet Nielsdatter was accused of witchcraft.⁷⁰⁹ Court records are intact for four of the cases: Karen Edisdatter’s, Kirsten Sørensdatter’s, Lisbet Nilsdatter’s and Mette Torgjersdatter’s. The fate of the other women is known through pieces of information in the regional accounts, where the crown’s expenses for burning witches are registered. Twelve of the women in this panic received death sentences. One was released in expectation of a new District Court meeting the following spring.⁷¹⁰

⁷⁰⁴ Næss, H. E., ‘Fra tingskriver til dommer. Tiden 1591–1797’ in *For rett og rettferdighet i 400 år. Sorenskriverne i Norge 1591–1991* (Oslo, 1991), 45.

⁷⁰⁵ In Danish ‘Om troldfolk og deres medvidere’.

⁷⁰⁶ Hagen, ‘At the Edge’, 29.

⁷⁰⁷ Niemi, *Vadsøs historie*, 221; Willumsen, *Trollkvinne* (1984), 28.

⁷⁰⁸ SATØ, SF 6, fo. 10v–12v.

⁷⁰⁹ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne* (1984), 30.

⁷¹⁰ Mette Thorgjersdatter, SATØ, SF 6, fo. 41r.

Persecution of witches in Finnmark during the 1630s and 1640s was characterised by relatively high activity during the 1630s (16 trials) and less during the 1640s (5 trials). Due to a lacuna in the court records from 1633 to 1648, we are dependent upon other sources. The archives of the District Governor provide important source material to cover the lacuna period in the form of transcripts of sentences.⁷¹¹ In addition the district accounts provide valuable information, though in a brief form, about people who were burned and what they left behind in goods and clothes.⁷¹² The manuscript of Hans H. Lilienskiold mentioned above is also an important source for witchcraft persecution in Finnmark during these two decades because it mentions six witchcraft trials not mentioned elsewhere.⁷¹³ However, neither the district accounts nor Lilienskiold's manuscript are fit for narratological analysis, as mentioned in the introduction, the latter being an amended and shortened version of the court records of the witchcraft trials.

Compared with the previous witchcraft trials, the 1630s and 1640s show some new trends. Several women were tortured after the passing of the sentence. Also of interest is the documentation of the idea that witches were organized into districts, an idea that had not appeared previously during the witchcraft trials in Finnmark. As for weather magic, the records show clearly that the women accused of witchcraft in this period performed the same type of magic that Sami sorcerers were known to have been well versed in at the time. With roots going back to the 1620s (in the mention of sentenced persons and collective sorcery operations from the previous decade), the witchcraft documents from the 1630s support an interpretation of witchcraft persecution in which an atmosphere of continuing suspicion related to witchcraft in the local communities suddenly exploded and resulted in linked trials, as we shall see for the years 1632 and 1634.

Geographically the witchcraft cases were less clustered around Vardøhus Castle during these decades than in the following decades. In addition, there was some witchcraft activity among the Samis further east, in Porsanger.⁷¹⁴

7.2 Marit Tamisdatter, 1634

The trial of Marit Tamisdatter took place in Makkaur, a small village to the north-west of Vardø. I would like to draw attention to the fact that Marit Tamisdatter – and this was the

⁷¹¹ SATØ, AF, no. 2543, copies of sentences 1631–1670.

⁷¹² RA, Rentekammeret, Lensregnskaper for Vardøhus len.

⁷¹³ NLD, Thott no. 950,2'.

⁷¹⁴ Among them the Sami Sarve Pedersen, who was put to trial and executed in the year 1634. SATØ, AF, no. 2543, Domsutskrifter 1631–1670.

same for several other women accused of witchcraft in Finnmark in this decade – underwent the water ordeal and was tortured after sentence.

Marit was a married woman, the wife of Erich Quern in Makkaur. She had been denounced by Ingeborg, Oluf Mogensen's wife from Hamningberg, a small village near Vardø. Marit Tamisdatter first denied knowledge of witchcraft. It was used as an argument against her that she had been denounced three times. In the structures of the text, the expression 'for the third time' is used as a reinforcing interposed remark, strengthening the element of frequent denunciation. Being denounced more than once seems to have been used as an argument in court. In other trials one can see that the bailiff gave weight to denunciation by two witches who had already been burned.⁷¹⁵ Marit Tamisdatter was then offered the opportunity to clear herself of the accusations by using neighbours to swear an oath of compurgation for her, a procedure often practised in the Norwegian material. The court records show that the bailiff tried to use his legal knowledge by moving step by step collecting the required evidence in the case, and this was the first step. The voice of the law is heard in the rendering of the bailiff's words:

*She was told to ask her women neighbours to clear her but none of them would swear an oath of compurgation, for which reason the bailiff put before the court that she, having been denounced now, for the third time, and having proved unable to clear herself of the accusations, should be tried by the water ordeal. So since she could not clear herself of the accusations levelled against her, we had no other course than to order that she should be tried by the water ordeal, which was what happened.*⁷¹⁶
[My italics.]

As she was unable to clear herself, the water ordeal was the next step. The type of 'evidence' given by the water ordeal, which frequently was used in Finnmark, was always the same – guilty for those who were floating. Heikki Pihlajamäki discusses why ordeals returned to use in early modern European witchcraft trials after they had been prohibited for several hundred years.⁷¹⁷ He argues that the English and Scandinavian judicial systems employed a logic wholly different to that of their continental counterparts:

When the German and French inquisitors sought circumstantial evidence in witchcraft cases, their more peripheral colleagues in England and Scandinavia mostly left the accused at the mercy of the jurymen, nämndemän or compurgators. As we shall see, little place was left for the ordeals in these peripheral systems of evidence.⁷¹⁸

Looking at Scotland and Finnmark, there was a jury in both areas. But circumstantial evidence was sought as well, as has been pointed out by Levack for the Scottish procedural

⁷¹⁵ For instance in the trial of Kirsten, Rasmus Siffuersen's wife, SATØ, AF, no 2543.

⁷¹⁶ SATØ, AF, no. 2543, Copies of sentences [*Domsutskrifter*] 1631–1670.

⁷¹⁷ "Swimming the Witch, Pricking for the Devil's mark": Ordeals in the Early Modern Witchcraft Trials', *Legal History*, vol. xxi, no. 2 (2000), 35–58.

⁷¹⁸ Pihlajamäki, 'Swimming', 45.

system.⁷¹⁹ Pihlajamäki's argument could be accepted if one takes the mixed systems of criminal procedures into consideration, where inquisitorial as well as accusatorial features were found. Goodare points out that the water ordeal was used there only in 1597.⁷²⁰ In Finnmark 15 water ordeals out of 23 for the whole of Norway took place.⁷²¹ In a Scandinavian context, the Finnmark witchcraft trials seem to be somewhat similar to the witch trials on the islands of Åland in Sweden, referred to by Pihlajamäki as trials where 'traces of continental practice reached Scandinavia as well'.⁷²² The Åland trials have been shown to be largely the work of one man, the district court judge Nils Psilander. He was strongly influenced by the witch doctrine and presided over the court himself.⁷²³ Pihlajamäki points out that Psilander's witch procedure was clearly 'continental':

Psilander and his court wanted the accused's confession in order to convict, and to obtain this they diligently sought sufficient circumstantial evidence to begin torture by thumb-screws. This circumstantial evidence, as in the continental doctrine, could appear in the form of denunciation or in witness statements. These 'rational' ways of obtaining evidence, were, however, often not sufficient and they needed to be complemented by other measures.⁷²⁴

For Psilander, the search for the Devil's mark was of special interest as a type of measure that could help to obtain additional information, not the water ordeal. But the parallel to the Finnmark trials is striking, not least the analogy between the important roles apparently played by the district court judge in Åland and the district governor at Vardøhus. Pihlajamäki argues that the water ordeal and the pricking test developed in close contact with the learned theory of proof and that when the ordeals were found in the peripheral regions of, for instance, Scandinavia, this had to do with the learned law of proof and the progress the theory had gained in that area. According to John L. Langbein the canon law of proof 'spread throughout Europe in the movement that is called the reception of Roman law'.⁷²⁵ This law of proof consisted of three points: punishment requires full proof, two eyewitnesses or confession; circumstantial evidence bears only on whether or not to use torture; if full proof cannot be obtained, the accused must be released.⁷²⁶

Pihlajamäki's argument might be related to witchcraft trials in Scotland as well as in Finnmark due to the mixed systems of criminal procedures practised in both areas. Clearly

⁷¹⁹ Levack, *Witch-Hunting*, 20.

⁷²⁰ Goodare, J., 'The Scottish Witchcraft panic of 1597', in Goodare, *Scottish witch-hunt in context*, 60.

⁷²¹ Næss, *Trolldomsprosessene i Norge*, 199.

⁷²² Pihlajamäki, 'Swimming', 50.

⁷²³ Heikkinen, A., *Paholaisen liitoolaiset: Noita- ja magiakäsityksiä Suomessa 1600-luvun jälkipuoliskolla* (Helsinki, 1969), 208, 242.

⁷²⁴ Pihlajamäki, 'Swimming', 50–51.

⁷²⁵ Langbein, *Torture*, 3.

⁷²⁶ Langbein, *Torture*, 49–50.

traces of continental practice have been shown in the analyses of the witchcraft trials above. In this respect similarities with Åland witchcraft trials also come to the fore.

The water ordeal was not considered as torture, but as a means of gathering evidence.⁷²⁷ Often accused persons confessed when threatened by the water ordeal.⁷²⁸ After the water ordeal had been applied, one often finds in the records from Finnmark remarks like ‘as could be seen’, which meant that the jury as well as common people attending the court functioned as a kind of witnesses for this type of proof. In the case of Marit Tamisdatter, she still refused to confess after the water ordeal. However, it seems that the bailiff considered the water ordeal as evidence in its own right, a test which was reliable and which made it possible to declare her guilty:

She floated like a bob, and *since* she came out of the sea and stood before the court again still refusing to confess, the bailiff put to the court that *after such denunciations and tests* she should lose her life in fire at the stake, and he requested final judgment. Then, *on the grounds of the above, and since she has thrice been denounced for having taken part in casting spells on people and has been put to the water ordeal and thus found guilty*, we had no other course than to decide that she must lose her life in fire at the stake.*[My italics.]*⁷²⁹

The term ‘the entire court’ in the citation above probably means the jury. This sentence was passed before Marit Tamisdatter had confessed or denounced other women. It was therefore desirable to get more out of her, and torture was used: ‘When sentence had been passed on the said Maritte, she was interrogated under torture and confessed *very little*’.⁷³⁰ *[My italics.]* She started to confess during torture, but this was not enough. So far, we have heard a reliable scribe. But when it is said that the next day she continued ‘without torture’, I think this is a truth with modifications. After all, she was tortured the day before, and this must be seen in relation to her confession the following day. The remark ‘without torture’ from the hand of the scribe might suggest that it was important in the formal document to hide that she was tortured anew. Certainly, at this point it was necessary to obtain more information from her. It is interesting to note that the jury when passing the sentence moves into the first person: ‘we had no other course’, thus losing the objective perspective obtained by an impersonal manner of expression.

But *on the second day, she confesses without torture* that she was with Ingeborgh from Haffningbergh in Wardøen, and she [Ingeborg] first taught her to tie knots on a piece of cloth, and put black, white and red stones in them. After that, she confesses that she was with Ingeborgh and two women from Kieluig. One of them, named Kirsten, was tall and middle-aged and in the likeness of a goose. The other, named

⁷²⁷ Pihlajamäki, ‘Swimming’, 35–58.

⁷²⁸ Sörlin, *Trolldoms- och vidskepelseprocesserna i Göta hovrätt*, 54.

⁷²⁹ SATØ, AF, no. 2543, Domsutskrifter 1631–1670.

⁷³⁰ SATØ, AF, no. 2543, Domsutskrifter 1631–1670.

Anne, was young, tall and fat and she was in the likeness of a duck. All of them cast a spell on Michel Lauritzen's boat.⁷³¹ As for the other things Ingeborgh had said about her in the *three denunciations*, she confesses it was all true. Moreover she says that *when the executioner*⁷³² *shaved off her eyebrows, Satan left her at once*. She confesses more, denouncing Marritte, Oluff Møring's wife, for having cast a spell on Anders Mand, from these parts, Matkurffue, and she tied three knots on a piece of cloth and *put three stones into them* and when he was rowing out to sea, she walked on the shore, throwing the stones after him, saying: *Off you go, never to return*. On that very day, the man drowned. She also reported that the said Maritte put a kid on the roof of Oluff Pouelsen's farmhouse, and that he had words with her about it, and shortly after, he lost an eye.⁷³³
[*My italics.*]

Marit Tamisdatter's repetition of being denounced three times is interesting as three is a magical number, often found in folklore and traditional oral tales. The number three appears again when she describes her sorcery ritual. Also of interest is the image of the Devil leaving her when her eyebrows were shaved off. This is an image not seen elsewhere in the Finnmark material. It seems demonological, as the *Malleus Maleficarum* mentions shaving. Most interesting is her rendering of the magic ritual and the magic words she used when casting the spell, affirming that magic formulas were dependent upon poetic devices and rhythm – a short and pointed saying. Her belief in the magic words and rituals was shared by the scribe, as there are no distancing devices used in the text to signal doubt about the force of her craft. The attitude of the scribe towards what is written is confident, as when rendering the cause-and-effect connection related to the quarrel between Marit and Oluf Poulsen and his loss of an eye shortly afterwards.

John H. Langbein has investigated crime in European legal systems from medieval times until well into the eighteenth century. He states that torture was part of the ordinary criminal procedure, 'regularly employed to investigate and prosecute routine crime before the ordinary courts. The system was one of *judicial torture*'.⁷³⁴ [*Author's italics.*] Langbein defines 'judicial torture' as 'the use of physical coercion by officers of the state in order to gather evidence for judicial proceedings. The law of torture regulated this form of judicial investigation'.⁷³⁵

Related to the trial of Marit Tamisdatter, it seems that the judicial climate similar to Finnmark was the judicial climate of Western Europe in the middle of the seventeenth century. The representatives of the law allowed torture after conviction if the aim was to find the conspirators. Langbein says that in French sources this type of torture was called '*torture préalable*', literally 'preliminary torture', in the sense of being preliminary to the execution of

⁷³¹ Orig. 'jegt'.

⁷³² Orig. 'mestermannen'.

⁷³³ SATØ, AF, no. 2543.

⁷³⁴ Langbein, *Torture*, 3.

⁷³⁵ Langbein, *Torture*, 3.

the capital sentence: 'The safeguards of the ordinary law of torture, such as the requirement of probable cause, did not exist. Torture préalable was regarded as much less objectionable than ordinary judicial torture'.⁷³⁶

Looking at the structure of Marit Tamisdatter's trial, there is a strong increase in tension after the water ordeal, when she was first sentenced, then tortured. The torture was a turning point towards a confession, and when she had begun her confession, sorcery operations and denunciations were readily confessed. In addition to the confession quoted above, she confessed to having cast a spell on Oluf Poulsen, 'after which he presently got a backache, and it lasted quite a while, with cracks and contractions, so that he eventually had to go to bed for a fortnight and subsequently *had to use a staff on board his boat way into the spring fishing season*'.⁷³⁷ [*My italics.*] This was the worst time of the year for a fisherman to get a handicap like a backache, as this was the time for the main fisheries. The motives for casting spells seem to be quarrels with acquaintances and neighbours, often about everyday affairs. The last person Marit Tamisdatter denounced was another Marit, the wife of Oluff Møring.⁷³⁸

Moreover, she narrated that Marrite, too, cast a spell on the late Lauritz Taylor because he demanded payment for red fulled cloth for a skirt which Oluff Møring got in the past from the late Oluff Brat, the late Lauritz Taylor's servant. This confession about what Maritte did was delivered in the said Maritte's face, after which she was willing to meet her death and receive the sacrament upon it that what she confessed had happened just as has been related, something we confirm with the imprints of our signets here below.⁷³⁹

The voice of the narrator echoes the legal discourse, once more mentioning the sacrament she was going to receive and the confirmation of her confession. Then the next woman was brought to court, and she was also tortured.

During the 1640s six women were accused of witchcraft in Finnmark, four from the area around Vardø and two from the area around Vadsø. Five of them received death sentences, while the last was acquitted. She got her case tried before the Court of Appeal in 1650. At this time, the Appeal Court Judge, who was stationed in Steigen in Nordland, regularly travelled to Finnmark every third year and held his court meetings along the Finnmark coast, from east to west.⁷⁴⁰ Overall during the witchcraft trials in Finnmark, there

⁷³⁶ Langbein, *Torture*, 17.

⁷³⁷ SATØ, AF, no. 2543, Domsutskrifter 1631–1670.

⁷³⁸ 'Møring' denotes the place he came from, Møre, an area south of Trondheim.

⁷³⁹ SATØ, AF, no. 2543, Domsutskrifter 1631–1670.

⁷⁴⁰ Falkanger, *Lagmann*, 126.

was a greater chance for the accused person to be acquitted if the case was tried before the Court of Appeal than before the local court, as the statistical analysis has shown.

7.3 The 1662–3 panic

7.3.1 General

The 1650s were characterized by a panic in 1651–3 in which 14 women were implicated, and the linked trials of 1654–5 involving five women. In the first, the accused persons confessed to collective sorcery operations causing the shipwrecks of large boats steered by Bergen captains.⁷⁴¹ A Bergen citizen living in Vadsø, Lauritz Henrichsen Bras, played an important role in pushing the trials held in Vadsø, as pointed out and discussed by Einar Niemi.⁷⁴² His position and place of abode were related to the Bergen trade, where fishermen from the north of Norway sailed with small cargo boats called ‘jekter’ to Bergen to sell stock fish in exchange for flour and other types of food. This was common from the twelfth century onwards and an important source of income for the whole northern part of Norway.⁷⁴³ The Bergen merchants, with roots going back to the Hanseatic League, established in Bergen from the middle of the fourteenth century, had a monopoly of the Finnmark trade during the seventeenth century. This trade was based on the triangle between the Bergen merchant, the peasant fisherman and the landowners in Finnmark. In the local communities there was an arrangement by which outfitters (in Norwegian ‘utredere’) were necessary to supply the fishermen with equipment for fishing. Lauridtz Henrichsen Bras was such an outfitter. From December 1651 till March 1653, 13 married women from Vadsø, Vardø, Ekkerøy, Andersby, Kiberg and Syltevik were sentenced to be burnt at the stake after having confessed about pacts with the Devil. Four of the women lived in Vadsø, three women lived in Vardø and the rest lived in small fishing villages near Vadsø and Vardø. Court sessions were held in Vadsø, Kiberg and Vardø, with the fort of Vardøhus as the centre of witch-hunting activity.⁷⁴⁴ Ten of the death sentences were passed at Vardøhus, and three death sentences were passed in Kiberg.

The 1660s were characterized by the largest panic during the Finnmark witchcraft trials, the 1662–3 panic. It involved 29 people, all women; six of them were little girls, and one had not even turned one year. A Sami woman introduced the panic, as was the case in 1620–1. Three of

⁷⁴¹ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne* (1984), 28.

⁷⁴² Niemi, *Vadsøs historie*, 223–5.

⁷⁴³ Kiil, A., *Når bøndene seilte* (Oslo, 1993).

⁷⁴⁴ Balsvik, *Vardø*, 20–33.

the women were said to be mentors for other women. Seventeen of the women were married, five were still, or had been, servants, and two were born south of Finnmark. It was the most cruel of all the witchcraft trials in Finnmark, with extensive use of torture.

A common denominator with previous panics was that the implicated women lived in various parts of Varanger – seven of them in Ekkerøy, nine in Vadsø, six in Vardø, two in Kiberg, three in Andersby, and one in Makkaur, see Figure 17 below. Nevertheless, 17 of the women were questioned and tried at Vardøhus, whereas only two were tried in Vadsø and one in Kiberg. This means that Vardøhus castle played an important role during this panic, as the centre of interrogation and torture. Two persons died as a result of torture. The execution rate of this linked trial as a whole was 71 per cent, deaths under torture not included.

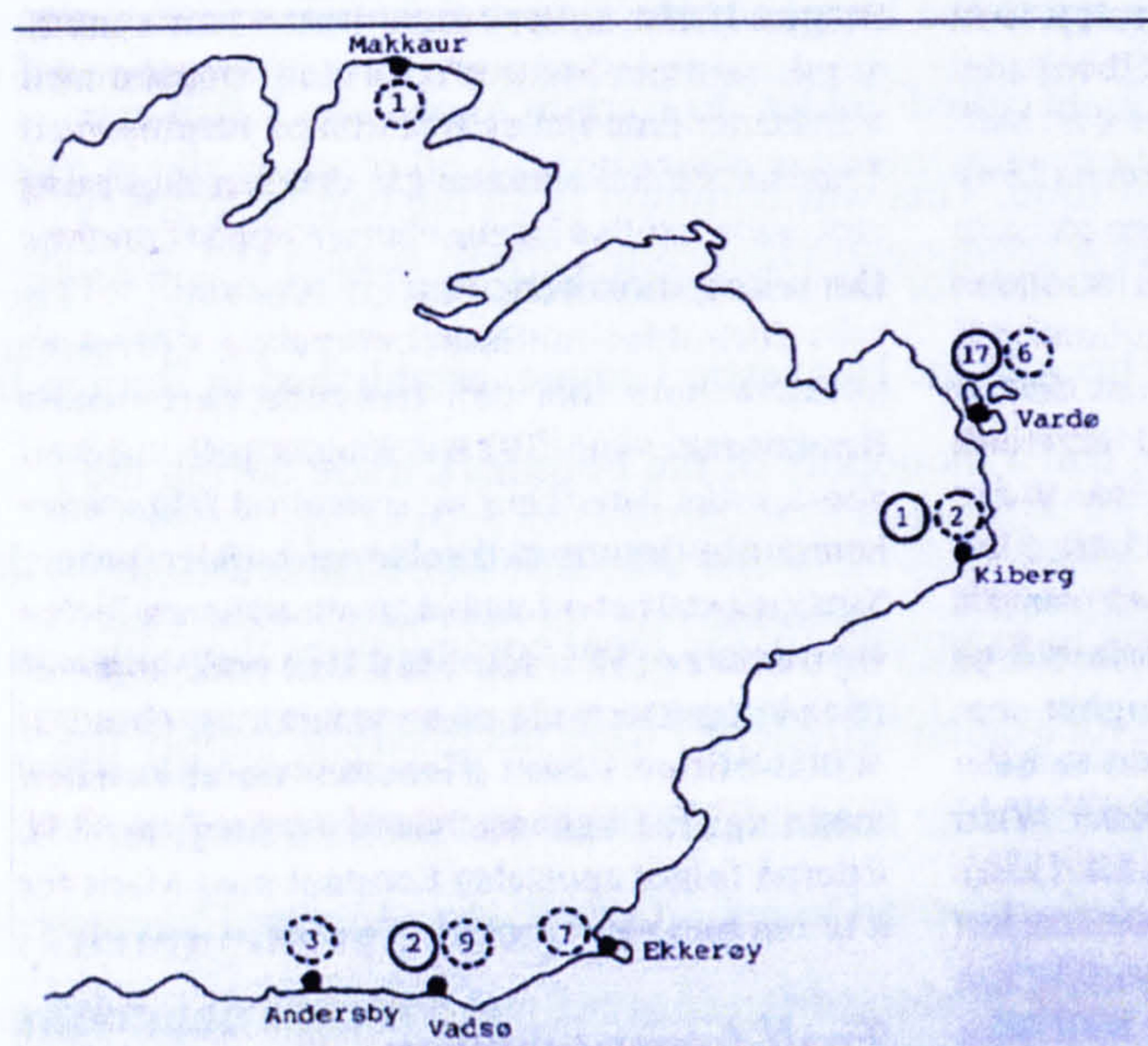


Figure 17 Place of living and place of trial 1662–3, Finnmark

In Figure 17 above stippled circle denotes place of living and continuous circle denotes place of trial .

The principal collective operations confessed to by the witches in 1662–1663 were driving away fish from the coast, evil spells cast on Jens Ottesen's and Marcus Erichsen's ships, and a conspiracy against the 'district lord'. In most cases when women confessed to having tried to harm ships by raising storms, they had done so while transformed into animals or birds. Jens Ottensen's ship was allegedly destroyed by eleven women sitting out at sea on an overturned barrel. Some of them had personal motives for this act, whereas Karen

Oelsdatter participated more or less because she wanted to assist the others, who 'would have her with them since they were wrathful against the captain'.⁷⁴⁵

Eight women confessed to having caused 'bad weather against Captain Marcus Erichsen and his ship (...) for the reason that (...) the said Barbra had not been paid in full for her trouble and for the rent'.⁷⁴⁶ In other words, the other women displayed solidarity with Barbra and joined her because she felt she had been wronged. However, the women were unsuccessful with their spell on the boat. The evil-doing had to fail, 'for God was stronger than Satan'.⁷⁴⁷

The confessions give an interesting insight into the close connections between the accused women in a panic. The astonishing web of relations between the women during this panic is clearly shown in Figure 18 below.

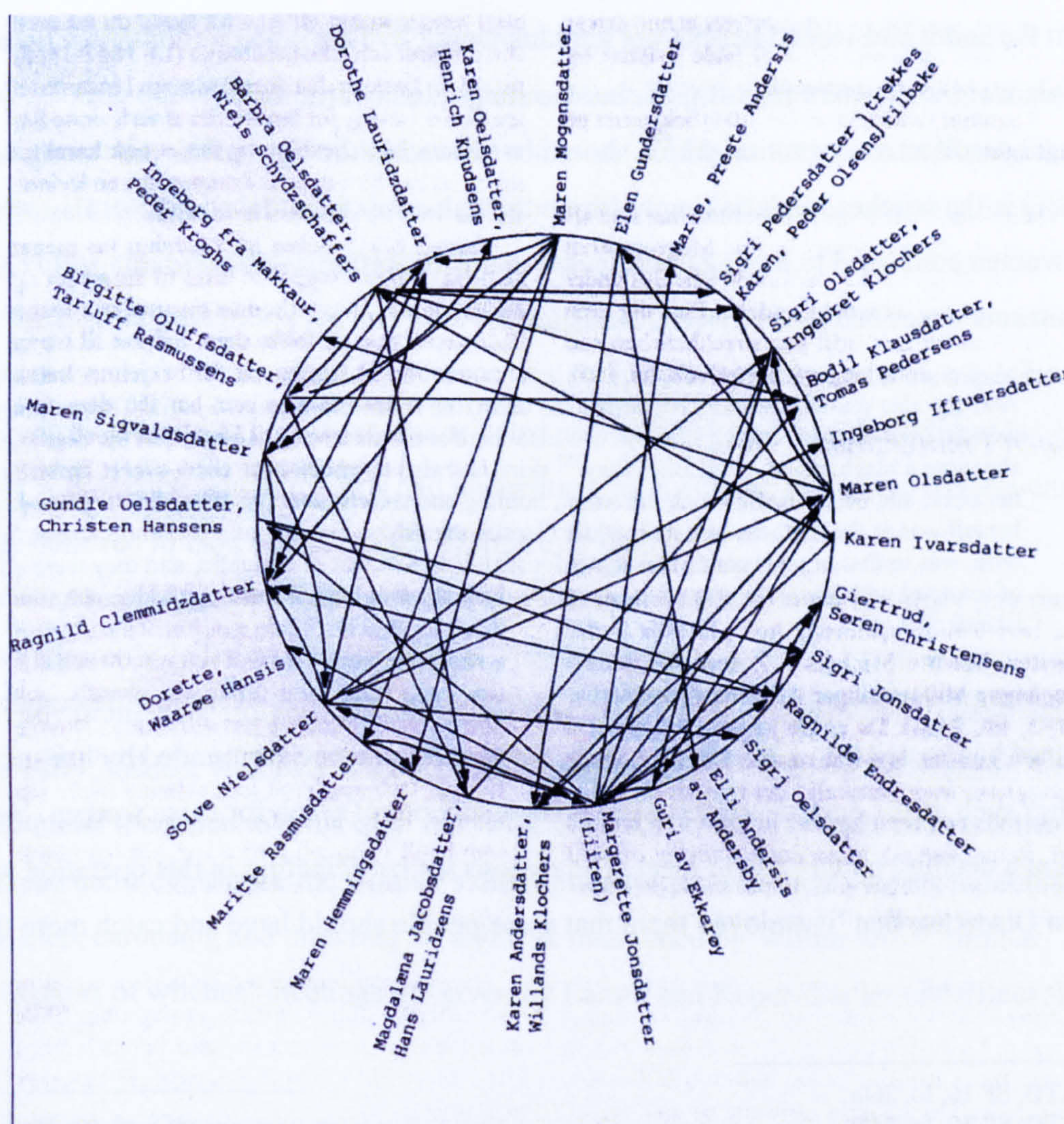


Figure 18 Web of denunciations 1662-3, Finnmark

⁷⁴⁵ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 276v.

⁷⁴⁶ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 273v.

⁷⁴⁷ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 268r.

The names around the circle denote all the women involved in the network of denunciations during the 1662–3 panic. I will not try to analyse the diagram in full here, but use it to illustrate the consistent use of denunciations by the women interrogated and the tight network of naming and contra-naming. When the arrow is pointing one way only, one woman denounced another woman. When an arrow points both ways, two women denounced each other.

A lesser project was undertaken by Margrete Jonsdatter, Solve Nilsdatter and Marie, the wife of Anders. This project was casting an evil spell on the sleigh of the previous district governor, Jørgen Friis, ‘which had been dispatched to collect wood along the Russian coast’.⁷⁴⁸ The motive for this evil spell was Margrete Jonsdatter’s ex-suitor who was on this sleigh; ‘Niels from the south had wooed her but not kept his word’.⁷⁴⁹ This project, too, failed, because the people were in constant fear of God, but the sleigh was overturned.⁷⁵⁰

A collective operation which should be viewed in the light of the previous years’ poor fishing is the witches’ undertaking to ‘drive the fish away from the coast, last Easter’.⁷⁵¹ Seven of the women confessed to having participated in this operation, which was allegedly carried out in the manner described by Margrete Jonsdatter:

And she also roundly denounced, before the court, the following person, Giertrud, Søren Christensen's woman from Krogen, saying that she was also there at the time, true enough⁷⁵² in her own likeness, and that she wore a black jacket, a red Bøffelbay⁷⁵³ skirt, and also a red cap with golden lace, and white linen around her neck, and besides, she sat on the water, holding and surrounded by seaweed. Margrette says that she herself was in the likeness of a gull, while Gundle was in the likeness of a seal and Dorette, Waarøe Hans's wife, was in that of a porpoise, and Sigrij Jonsdatter was in that of a bluefin, and they were all holding stalks of seaweed with which they used their craft to drive the fish from the shore, and this they did around all the islands.⁷⁵⁴

From Margrete’s description of Gjertrud a yearning for beauty in everyday life comes to us. Gjertrud has turned into a beautifully garbed queen on a throne surrounded by her subjects. Clothes such as the ones described were presumably out of reach for these women. Yet, they serve to paint a detailed picture of the ideal. The reasons for participating in this operation were, for Karen Olsdatter, that ‘it annoyed them that some people should have and catch more fish than

⁷⁴⁸ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 260r.

⁷⁴⁹ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 260r.

⁷⁵⁰ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 260r.

⁷⁵¹ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 260r.

⁷⁵² This is an idiomatic expression, in Norwegian ‘riktignok’.

⁷⁵³ A soft, thick material of carded wool, loosely spun, woolly on one side, smooth on the other, used also to make coats, ref. Elstad, Å., *Moteløver og heimpløver: tekstilar samfunnsendringar i Øksnes og Astafjord 1750–1900* (Stamsund, 1997), 153.

⁷⁵⁴ SATØ, SF 10, fos. 260r–260v.

others'⁷⁵⁵ and for Birgitte Olufsdatter, that 'she was angry with her master, for he from whom everybody ordered their wares sold them dear, and kept the highest prices'.⁷⁵⁶

The last witchcraft operation in this chain was an attempt to cast an evil spell on the district governor and his young lady 'because he had treated them so harshly', as Solve Nilsdatter put it.⁷⁵⁷ The tale, which was corroborated by three of the children, the twelve-year-old Maren Olsdatter, the eight-year-old Ingeborg Iversdatter and her sister Karen Iversdatter, was indeed an odd one. Ellen Gundersdatter explained that the district governor was visiting in Vadsø, where he passed the night in the deputy bailiff's house. While he 'was in the sitting room in bed with his beloved young lady', the witches would 'blow on him in the name of the evil Satan. But since our good Lord Jesus and his holy angels were with and betwixt them, they were obstructed, so that their evil intention could not come to pass as they had planned'.⁷⁵⁸ One of the other implicated persons, the small girl Karen Iversdatter, claimed they 'had wanted to kill the district governor with pins'.⁷⁵⁹ Maren Olsdatter explained that 'they were obstructed because the district governor was for ever reading, praying for God's mercy'.⁷⁶⁰ The same Maren claimed that Solve, Sigrid and Margrete were to blame for the pain in the district governor's leg and arm. Although we might be tempted to smile at this story, it seems clear that the district governor was so upset by what the women might be able to accomplish, that Solve Nilsdatter was arrested and put in chains, and the children's evidence was heeded. The little girls had understood, as is evident from their confessions, that whoever believed in God was protected against evil spells.

What might be considered a variant of a witches' meeting was a riotously gay party in Anders Pedersen's cellar on Christmas Eve. This event was referred to by several women in the panic. They drank beer from a ladle and Satan was there together with them. This must have been a merry party, indeed, with two of the women fighting with each other. One of them, Solve Nilsdatter, had too much to drink and 'fell twice or thrice on the way back from whence the evil one had led them'.⁷⁶¹ Maybe the women's descriptions expressed their longing to let themselves go, like men, carousing and brawling all night, as mentioned by Willumsen.⁷⁶² Similar interpretations of witches' meetings are given by Larner and Roper. Larner underlines the element

⁷⁵⁵ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 276r.

⁷⁵⁶ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 275r.

⁷⁵⁷ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 250v.

⁷⁵⁸ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 255r-255v.

⁷⁵⁹ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 252r.

⁷⁶⁰ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 246v.

⁷⁶¹ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 244v.

⁷⁶² Willumsen, *Trollkvinne* (1994), 42.

of disorder; Roper the dance as an ‘interruption of the routine of town or village life’.⁷⁶³ Roper stresses the sexual dimension of the dance: ‘At the witches’ dance, each witch appeared as part of a pair. Male or female, each witch had her own diabolic lover. Most witches described how the dance culminated in actual copulation between humans and devils, making the sexual dimension of the fantasy explicit’.⁷⁶⁴

All sentences convicting a person to be burnt at the stake were passed by one or more of the triumvirate: the district governor Christopher Orning, the bailiff of East Finnmark, Nils Sørensen Fiil, and the deputy bailiff, Abraham Lockert. That their outlook was fanatical should be evident when the bailiff proposed that the children, too, should be burnt ‘so that they stray no further into the Devil’s snares, and so that other children should not be beguiled through them by the Devil’s machinations’.⁷⁶⁵ However, the children were acquitted.

In my discussion of the 1660s below I would like to draw attention to the following topics: new demonological ideas found in the sources from this decade, children among the accused persons and the use of torture during the panic of 1662–3.

7.3.2 The Rhodius couple and new demonological ideas

To a greater extent than any of the previous panics in Finnmark, this one might illustrate how the demonological notions came to the far north of Europe. During these linked trials concepts from the intricate science of demonology even percolate to the women’s own confessions, ideas that had never been mentioned in Finnmark so far. Such ideas include maternal child-sacrifice to the Devil – which is an echo of the *Malleus Maleficarum*⁷⁶⁶ – the Devil’s mark, and the idea that the Devil fathered a woman’s child, learned ideas known in Copenhagen and the rest of Europe. This panic is unique in the way that the introduction of new ideas to a restricted group of people, here the group of imprisoned women at Vardøhus castle, can be followed closely. These ideas were narrated within the walls of the castle and could easily be recalled and retold by the suspects in front of the court. These notions about the Devil were apparently regarded as interesting both by the interrogators and by the accused women. It may be noted that the number of demonological elements in the confessions increased from one decade to the following, something which suggests that stories about the Devil were spread orally among the common people and new elements were added to the narratives they knew of beforehand. The court records show that new ideas spread

⁷⁶³ Larnier, *Enemies*, 153; Roper, *Witch Craze*, 109–11.

⁷⁶⁴ Roper, *Witch Craze*, 111.

⁷⁶⁵ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 257v.

⁷⁶⁶ Behringer, *Witches*, 142. The Dominican inquisitor Kramer had claimed in his *Witches Hammer* that daughters were likely to become witches themselves, not by inheritance, but because the mothers devoted them to their master, the devil.

rapidly. The panic demonstrates how specific ideas were transferred from one geographical area to another. And it shows that introducing new notions was the work of one person. In fact, one can say that the ideological influence of one specific person had a triggering effect on the outset of these linked trials.

What happened was that a learned couple from the south of Norway, Ambrosius Rhodius and Anne Friedrichsdatter Rhodius, imprisoned at Akershus castle near Oslo, were transported to Vardøhus along the coast of Northern Norway during the winter months of 1662, just a few months before the panic started.⁷⁶⁷ Together with them came another prisoner, the dismissed vicar Engbret Madsen. They were placed in one of the houses within the castle walls. Ambrosius Rhodius was an astrologer and physician from Kemberg in Saxony.⁷⁶⁸ He was considered to be politically dangerous because as a result of a vision in 1657 he had predicted the result of an ongoing war.⁷⁶⁹ His wife was a grandchild of the private physician of Frederik II (1534–88). She was imprisoned after a severe disagreement with the governor and the mayor in Christiania, the capital of Norway, where they were living. The Rhodius couple was supposed to be a threat to the security of the kingdom. Among other restrictions they were not allowed to have access to paper and ink while imprisoned at Vardøhus, as it was feared that they would contact the Swedish government. Ambrosius Rhodius must have been one of the most erudite people in Finnmark at the time. With their education and former social standing the couple must have distinguished themselves from other prisoners.

It was Anne Friedrichsdatter Rhodius who would come to have a tremendous impact on the panic of 1662–3. Because the children suspected of witchcraft came to Vardøhus at a time when the castle was crowded with adult suspects, at least one of the children, Maren Olsdatter, had to stay in the same house as the Rhodius couple, which provided a good opportunity for Anne to influence her. In addition, Anne Friedrichsdatter had her own key to the ‘witches’ hole’⁷⁷⁰ and talked with women suspected of witchcraft imprisoned at Vardøhus. Two of the imprisoned women were pregnant, and she was asked to examine them, so she must have had a reputation as a person with some knowledge of medicine and health care. She played a prominent part in prison life and had considerable sway on the confessions made by the suspected women and children. According to imprisoned women and children, Anne was a most unpopular person amongst the prisoners. True enough, she was a prisoner herself, but she colluded with the wardens and prison

⁷⁶⁷ Wessel, *Ambrosius*, 21. Wessel notes that a royal writ from Ivar Krabbe pronounced that they should be imprisoned in Vardøhus fort, having previously been kept in Akershus fort.

⁷⁶⁸ Bergh, ‘Til ild’, 140.

⁷⁶⁹ ‘Krabbekrigen’ 1657–8 and ‘Revansjekrigen’ 1658–60.

⁷⁷⁰ One room at the castle was called ‘The witches’ hole’, in Norwegian ‘Troldequindehullet’.

authorities.⁷⁷¹ She may have sought to win favours from the district lord and his bailiff, probably to win release from her imprisonment.

The alleged plot against the district governor led to a confrontation between Anne Friedrichsdatter and several of the suspects at court. On 7 April 1663 Barbra, the wife of Nils the purveyor, denounced the wife and daughter of Peder Olsen, jury member, for witchcraft. Peder Olsen protested strongly, but Barbra said that Anne Rhodius and Maren had said this was true the day before. Then the two were sent for. During the confrontation Barbra, Maren and the daughter of Gjertrud were asked if Anne Rhodius had asked them to lie about anybody. They answered no. But when the district governor asked Maren if it was true that Peder Olsen's wife and daughter had been together with the other witches plotting against the district governor, she answered that it was true. However, this time the court did not believe Maren. They had probably become suspicious about the reliability of a child's testimony. From this episode it seems clear that Anne Friedrichsdatter knew the suspects and played an active role during the trials.

In the local court the bailiff first put to the court whether the children should not be punished in fire at the stake, in order to prevent them from leading other children astray. But the jury found it difficult to judge, and the cases of the children were passed on to the Court of Appeal,⁷⁷² a circuit court which was due to be held in Finnmark in the summer of 1663. Among others Maren Olsdatter was questioned by the Court Appeal Judge⁷⁷³ during a session held on 25 June 1663. The same impression of Anne Friedrichsdatter as had come to the fore in the records of the local court was confirmed. During the sessions of the Court of Appeal Anne Friedrichsdatter again played an active role, as she was frequently confronted with the suspects.⁷⁷⁴ Anne Friedrichsdatter was also said to have told a pregnant woman, Ragnhild Endresdatter, that she was 'carrying not a child but a Devil'.⁷⁷⁵ When Maren Olsdatter was questioned by the Court Appeal Judge, she had nothing to confess, but cried and recited some sections from the catechism. The Court Appeal Judge concluded that 'Ane Rhodi' had tempted her to lie about herself and others.⁷⁷⁶ Finally all the children were acquitted by the Court of Appeal, so that those who had parents alive could learn from and obey their parents. For those who did not have parents alive, some of the neighbours out of Christian disposition had undertaken to care for the children as their own.⁷⁷⁷

⁷⁷¹ Wessel, *Ambrosius*. He believes Anna Rhodius had an 'unstable disposition'.

⁷⁷² In Norwegian 'lagrett'.

⁷⁷³ In Norwegian 'lagmann'.

⁷⁷⁴ For instance in the case of Magdalene Jacobsdatter, who finally was acquitted. SAT, LF 1647–1668, fos. 152–154.

⁷⁷⁵ SAT, LF 1647–68, fo. 155.

⁷⁷⁶ SAT, LF 1647–68, fo. 151.

⁷⁷⁷ SAT, LF 1647–1668, fo. 152.

However, the most comprehensive information about the influence of Anne Friedrichsdatter on those imprisoned for witchcraft is a written order from Ambrosius Rhodius to the district governor Frederic Schiort, presented on 8 October 1666.⁷⁷⁸ The background for the order was this: Ambrosius Rhodius was pardoned by a letter from the King of 2 July 1666. Probably Anne Friedrichsdatter also hoped to be pardoned and would try to clear herself. Therefore Ambrosius Rhodius presented an order consisting of 29 itemized questions to be recited verbatim in court. The questions focused on what had been wrongly recorded about Anne Friedrichsdatter during the trials. The purpose was to clear her of the complaints that had apparently been raised against her. After discussion of the questions in court it was stated that Anne Friedrichsdatter had been very active in influencing the confessions of the suspected adults and children during the panic of 1662–1663, trying to make them confess.⁷⁷⁹ It was decided that she would remain in custody at Vardøhus.

Overall the role of Anne Friedrichsdatter during the 1662–1663 panic is interesting in showing her intermediate position. On the one hand she was an outsider, a learned person from other levels of society than the suspects imprisoned at Vardøhus. On the other hand she was a woman and a fellow-prisoner. It seems that the authorities as well as the jury were tired of the Rhodius couple and all the extra work they gave the court and wanted to be left in peace. When the court had finished answering Rhodius' 29 itemized questions, a little sigh from the jury was entered into the records; they 'humbly request our merciful district governor to succour us people of small means so that we can disembarass ourselves of Magister Rhodius and his wife's disruptive and uncalled-for questions'.⁷⁸⁰ Ambrosius Rhodius left Vardøhus in June 1667 for Christiania. The same year he moved to his home town of Kemberg, where he remarried in 1675 and died in 1697, 90 years old, after having bequeathed a legacy in memory of his release from Vardøhus castle. Anne Friedrichsdatter was alive in 1672, when a new house for her custody at Vardøhus was mentioned as an item of expenditure in the district accounts.⁷⁸¹

7.4 *Maren Olsdatter, 1663*

7.4.1 The trial

There were six children amongst those accused of witchcraft. One of them, Karen Iversdatter, was only eight years old. Another, Maren Olsdatter, was twelve. The girls confessed that they had

⁷⁷⁸ Schiort had been appointed district governor the same year.

⁷⁷⁹ SATØ, SF 11, fos. 96v–114r.

⁷⁸⁰ SATØ, SF 11, fo. 114r.

⁷⁸¹ The entry was made by the then district governor Bjelke, ref. Bergh, 'Til ild', 140.

learned the craft from their mothers and, in the case of Maren Olsdatter, from her aunt and her mother. In demonological writing it is stressed how difficult it is to get rid of the Evil One once he has found a foothold in a family.⁷⁸² The notion that children were given⁷⁸³ to the Devil by their mothers is found, for instance, in the confession of Ingeborg Iversdatter, in which she related about her sister Karen and herself, 'they both learnt it from their mother, for the Evil One was always with them in the past, and they cannot be rid of him, no matter how the priests work on them and try to convert them to Our Lord the Christ, he will never relinquish them, since they have been given to him by the mother'.⁷⁸⁴

Worse, even, than giving their children to the Devil is the notion that was introduced by Anna Rhodius in a conversation with Ragnhild Endresdatter. Their conversation is recounted in the records from the Court of Appeal. Ragnhild must have been pregnant and have given birth to a child in prison. Anna Rhodius had exhorted the pregnant Ragnhild to confess, employing every conceivable form of torture. Ragnhild answered 'then I must lie about myself so that my life will end when I give birth to my child'. The answer she got from Ane M. Rodj⁷⁸⁵ was: 'you are carrying not a child but a Devil'.⁷⁸⁶ This is the only instance where I have found any evidence in the material of the notion that the Devil had fathered a woman's child. The fact that such an allegation stemmed from a woman who had frequented learned circles is not surprising. There was a demonological debate as to whether the Devil or demons could engender offspring, and if so, whether the offspring would be humans or demons.⁷⁸⁷ But there were also popular beliefs about monstrous births.

The children's confessions at Vardøhus were taken extremely seriously. Their denunciations led to imprisonment and executions. Anne Rhodius manipulated the children by tempting and threatening them. When the children's cases were tried before the Court of Appeal they confessed that Anna Rhodius had persuaded them to lie about their mothers and to confess about pacts with the Devil.

A touching expression that might have to do with social distinctions was presented by the little eight-year-old Karen Iffuersdatter. She might have been describing what she had seen through a window when wealthy people were having a party. However, the image could also have religious connotations.

⁷⁸² Cf. for instance Nicolas Remy: *Demonolatriy* (London, 1930) chapter 3, orig. published 1595.

⁷⁸³ In the records the Norwegian word 'ofret' is used, which means 'sacrificed'.

⁷⁸⁴ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 257v.

⁷⁸⁵ Anne Magister Rhodius.

⁷⁸⁶ SAT, LF Finnmark 1647–68, fo. 155.

⁷⁸⁷ Broedel, H. P., *The Malleus Maleficarum and the construction of witchcraft* (Manchester, 2003).

The day after his honour and his young lady came to Vadsø (...) [they] had been outside the door in the likeness of crows, trying to get into the house in order to harm their honourable highnesses, but since there were so many wondrous and beautiful people therein, dressed in white linen, their evil deeds were not accomplished.⁷⁸⁸

Karen seems to have been overawed by the sight. This is interesting in relation to Robin Briggs's discussion on poor alleged witches resenting the rich.⁷⁸⁹

Maren Olsdatter was named on 26 January 1663 by another child, Ingeborg Iversdatter. In her confession Ingeborg also mentioned the names of Solve Nilsdatter, Ingeborg, Guri from Ekkerøy, Liiren Margrete and Sigrid – all adults. Ingeborg said that on Christmas Eve she and Solve had crawled under the gate of the castle in the shapes of cats and set off for Kiberg, led and carried by the Evil One. Solve wanted Guri from Ekkerøy and Ingeborg to go with them, but Ingeborg said she did not know how they would get back and stayed behind. Margrete excused herself, saying she was heavy.⁷⁹⁰ Eventually Solve and Ingeborg left on their own together with the Evil One. There they waited outside Anders Pedersen's cellar until the child Maren and Sigrid came from Vadsø. 'When they had arrived, they all went to the aforementioned Anders Pedersen's cellar, and while they were helping themselves to the contents of the barrels and drinking, the Evil One blew flames from the horn in his side, which lit up the cellar for them as he did so'.⁷⁹¹ This might be for amusement and entertainment; the Devil is often portrayed as a playful figure. So Maren's name was first introduced in connection with this merry and special Christmas party.

7.4.2 The voice of the scribe

In the case of Maren Olsdatter, the main task of the scribe seems to have been inserting words of coherence like 'also' in sentences like 'she also confesses' and 'the little girl confesses'.

The function of the scribe, in other words, was to keep the itemized confession together.

Maren herself answered the questions posed to her in a fluent way. There was no need for the questioners to press her. She did not hesitate, nor did she show any despair, so there was nothing unusual about her way of confessing that might be of interest for the scribe. Thus he does not give any description of Maren or any evaluative comments on her behalf. His voice is withdrawn. Instead Maren's own voice may be clearly heard in her confession written down in the court records on 26 January 1663, a day resulting in numerous pages in the records.

⁷⁸⁸ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 253r.

⁷⁸⁹ Briggs, *Witches*, 76–81.

⁷⁹⁰ This probably meant she was pregnant.

⁷⁹¹ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 244r.

The scribe shows scepticism as to whether Maren always told the truth. When she persistently named Peder Oelsen's wife and daughter, contrary to the confessions of the other accused adults, the district governor

*cautioned her to tell the truth if she wanted to be reckoned amongst God's children. To which she answered, saying that it was certain that she and her daughter are witch people and that they had both been in the shapes of cats, as has been narrated, and that they were at the castle for that great convention and that she does not want to vilify them, as the truth will always prevail in the end. [My italics.]*⁷⁹²

The scribe found it appropriate to include the district governor's cautious remark in the records. The philosophical concluding remark of Maren, which functions as a kind of a threat, is also given space in the records, maybe to show that Maren's discourse was very insistent.

7.4.3 The voice of the accused

The voice of the accused is rendered by the scribe in just the same way as the voices of the adults questioned. The children do not seem to have been treated in a childish way or asked different questions to the grown-ups. Maren was probably asked the same questions about witchcraft as the adults.

Brought before the court, the first question was about her mentor. Maren confessed she had learned witchcraft from 'her father's sister, Maritte, Michel's wife from that same place, who has already been executed for her evil deeds'.⁷⁹³ Similar to many of her contemporary accused, she told how she acquired sorcery through a special drink, 'and the said Maritte gave her a little beer in a bowl, and as she was drinking, she saw something lying in the bottom of the bowl, something that was black as dirt,⁷⁹⁴ something she refused to drink but poured out onto the floor'.⁷⁹⁵ Black spots in drinks taken by witchcraft suspects have been documented in other places, and this has led to various suggestions, among others the ergotism theory.⁷⁹⁶ This theory states that accusers suffered from ergotism and experienced symptoms that were interpreted as demonic possession. Here it is the witch that is supposed to have suffered from ergotism. This theory has not been much discussed since the 1970s, and has not been broadly supported by witchcraft researchers; Goodare, for example, is rather sceptical about it.⁷⁹⁷ I do not think there is evidence for maintaining that ergotism could be a major cause of the women's confessions. In the fantastic narratives told by the women, the

⁷⁹² SATØ, SF 10, fo. 269r.

⁷⁹³ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 245r.

⁷⁹⁴ 'Scharn', in the original, what is cut off or secreted, for instance mouse droppings.

⁷⁹⁵ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 245r.

⁷⁹⁶ Alm, 'The Witch Trials of Finnmark, Northern Norway, during the 17th century: Evidence for Ergotism as a Contributing factor', *Economic Botany*, 57, iii (2003), 403–416. Alm has used only Lilienskiöld's document as source material, not the court records.

⁷⁹⁷ Goodare, 'Ergotism' in Golden, *Encyclopedia*, 4 vols., ii, 321–322.

element of explanation of how they learnt sorcery is a central one, and introducing these dark spots in drink or food could be seen as a convincing explanation for how they became able to perform sorcery. Similar to the other ideas related to demonology and witchcraft spreading rapidly in an oral society, the idea of the dark spots could easily be transferred from person to person, eventually being retold during a confession.⁷⁹⁸ There are numerous examples during the witchcraft trials that specific notions are restricted to certain decades, in a way a passing fashion. This holds true for ideas within the legal framework as well as ideas flowering among the accused. The black spots could be looked upon as such an idea, making its entrance into the field of oral witchcraft belief and repeated within the witchcraft confessions during a restricted time period.

Maren finished her drink, and ‘the Devil came in to her as a black dog. And it had horns on its head, like goat horns’.⁷⁹⁹ The appearance of the Devil, in Maren’s description, is a common one. The image of the Devil as a creature with horns is widespread in oral tales and visual art. The notion of the Devil disguised as a dog is also frequent in folklore. But in her narrative about the Devil tempting her to be his servant, she also presented a more detailed portrait:

And he asked her twice whether she would serve him, to which she replied, No, she did not believe a dog could speak. On that same day, a little later, the Devil came to her in the likeness of a man, black with horns on his knees. On his hands and feet there were claws, and he wore a black hat and had a black beard, and he asked her once again to serve him, but she kept her silence and refused to answer. Then he asked her once more to serve him for then he would give her money. Then she replied, Yes, and agreed to offer him her services.⁸⁰⁰

As may be seen, the images of the Devil were internalized among children as well as adults. What was retold by the accused in court must have been part of an oral folk culture, heard and learned by old and young. Certainly sermons would have been important in introducing these notions into the local communities. Common people at this time could neither read nor write. All types of material were transmitted orally, from governmental information to folklore. We clearly see the oral touch in Maren’s narrative of temptation. The number three is well-known within folk tradition, and here we hear that the Devil asked her three times, and not until the fourth time did she answer. And the fact that the Devil offered her money seemed to be decisive. Taking into consideration that this is the voice of a child, it is interesting to see that in rendering this story, she maintained her autonomy vis-à-vis the Evil One, refusing several times to be his servant. She even revealed a sense of humour during her encounter with the

⁷⁹⁸ Dark spots are not mentioned in Thompson, S. (ed.), *Motif-index of Folk Literature* (Charlottesville, 2004).

⁷⁹⁹ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 245r.

⁸⁰⁰ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 245r–245v.

Devil, telling him that she did not believe a dog could speak. Maren had several fanciful elements in her confession, as was the case with the confessions of the other children as well. This is how Maren described a visit to hell:

The Devil then told her that she should accompany him to Hell. She submitted to his demand and accompanied him to Hell, and she says that the route was very long, and when she got to Hell, she saw a very large lake in which a fire was burning, and the water was boiling, and the lake was full of people lying in the water, many of them flat on their faces, boiling. Now, the Devil had an iron pipe out of which he blew flames, saying that she should enjoy as much. The Devil also had a leg of ham which he dipped into the said water, bringing it up again at once, and now it was cooked. The said girl narrates that this lake was in a valley, and it was surrounded by a great darkness, and the people burning in the water, women and men alike, howled like cats, and then she saw these summoned women who had gone with her to Hell, the bell ringer's Sigrj from Kjberg in the likeness of a crow, a woman from Madkorffue by the name of Ingeborg, wearing crutches and in the likeness of a dove, Lirren from Waarøen, in the likeness of a long-tailed duck, Solwe from Andersby, in the likeness of an auk, Gurrij from Eckerøen, in the likeness of a fledgling cormorant. As for herself, she was in the likeness of a crow. When they had been in Hell for a while, they all went their separate ways, home.⁸⁰¹

Such notions of Hell coincide with ideas that are common to this very day. Descriptions such as these may have seeped into popular beliefs through religious doctrine. Anyway, Maren must have been an observant child with a talent for story-telling, managing to bring into the narrative the detail about the Devil dipping a ham into the boiling water in hell. This might be a more innocent echo of the idea that the Devil boiled infant flesh in pots over the fire at Sabbaths, mentioned by Roper.⁸⁰² This milder touch of the contents of the witchcraft confessions in Finnmark is symptomatic for the documents there, as the tone on the whole is less harsh than on the Continent. Maren also had a dramatic touch, adding to her description of the people boiling in hell, that many of them were lying flat on their faces in the water. But the Devil was a playful figure, as may be seen from numerous descriptions of witches' meetings. He entertains his guests, trying to create a merry atmosphere – thus emphasizing the agony of the boiling people and the laid-back attitude of the master of this place. She also managed to insert the location of Hell, lying in a valley surrounded by a great darkness – thus playing upon the well-known dichotomy between the light related to heaven and the darkness related to evil forces. The whole narrative is framed by literary devices as we know them from traditional oral tales: first they left the human, recognisable world and at the end they went back to their daily lives. As a whole, this description by a small girl tends to strengthen the assumption that in orally transmitted stories, material about the Devil and his kingdom was of great interest, and that children were keen listeners to this type of story. To what extent a child could understand all the aspects of such a narrative, not least the religious aspect, is difficult

⁸⁰¹ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 245v–246r.

⁸⁰² Roper, *Witch Craze*, 108.

to say. The image of Hell, however, the children managed to remember and retell, as may be seen in Maren's case.

Her confession also contained a story about a witches' meeting at the Domen Mountain, not far from Vardø, where witches from the north allegedly met:

But somewhat later, on the eve of St Hans,⁸⁰³ last year, these aforementioned women came to her and took her with them to Dommen. And there was the Devil with a red fiddle which he played for them, dancing with them. Solve held his hand, the bell ringer's Sigrj held Solve's hand, Lirren held Sigrj's hand, little Maren held Liren's hand, Guren held this small child's hand and Ingeborg from Madkorff held Guren's hand. And when they had finished dancing, the Devil produced a small silver bowl and let them drink beer from it, saying that when they had served him, they would be remunerated with that very water which burned and boiled in Hell. And when they had made their arrangements and finished dancing with the Devil, each went back to her home led by the Evil One.⁸⁰⁴

This description emphasises the joyfulness and sisterhood of the witches' meeting, dancing in a ring, holding each other's hands. Drinking beer in alehouses might be associated with something the women rarely did in their daily lives. In this respect the witches' meeting seemed to represent an opportunity for the women to live out wishes and desires. Still, this was not an unpolished and utterly masculine event, on the contrary – a certain refined touch can be seen, symbolized by the silver bowl. There is a clear entrance to and exit from the narrative of the witches' meeting, relating it to oral tales, and previously mentioned as characteristic features of witchcraft confessions.

Certain rituals were related to stealing of milk from other people's cows. The details in connection with this type of sorcery were mentioned in Maren's confession:

She also confesses and gives an account of how she learnt from her father's sister, on the eve of St Hans, before she was brought to Dommen, how to milk a cow. To this end, the father's sister gave her a medium sized white horn, which she tried out by milking Mortten Jensen's cow, placing it on the cow's abdomen, saying that she wanted to milk in the name of the Devil. Then she got more milk than would fill a pail and after that, blood came out, and then the cow died.⁸⁰⁵

Cows giving blood was a well-known indication that they had been bewitched. Still, it is interesting to note that the girl was so aware of the size of the horn to be used, where to place it on the cow and what to say in order to perform sorcery. Even the eve of St Hans is mentioned by Maren. When a child was so aware of all the details related to sorcery, it indicates that this was common knowledge among people and that she had heard oral stories about sorcery and the Devil. How much she had learnt during her imprisonment and how much she had heard before she was imprisoned is difficult to distinguish. In my opinion, the

⁸⁰³ St John's Eve, a noted witchcraft time.

⁸⁰⁴ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 246r.

⁸⁰⁵ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 246r–246v.

living oral folk tradition in Finnmark at this time seems to have included both demonological and folkloric material: on the one hand about the Devil, the demonic pact, the witches' meeting; on the other about stealing milk from cows, and casting spells on animals and human beings. Thus Maren's confession is probably representative of the knowledge found among ordinary people, both those who were taken to court and accused of witchcraft and those who were not accused. The accused were asked direct questions, by the district governor among others, as can be seen during the trial of Guri from Ekkerøy, a woman accused in the same linked trial: 'Whereupon the district governor requests that she be questioned about it and also about who taught her, and where'.⁸⁰⁶ Maren was also asked 'from whom she had learnt witchcraft' when she was first called before the court.⁸⁰⁷ Thus Maren was in a situation during the questioning where all she had learnt about sorcery was activated. She was questioned by the representatives of the law in the same way as the imprisoned adult women, and her confession was taken seriously.

The ability to transform themselves into different shapes was an element of demonology frequently confessed to by the women. These shapes were used to perform sorcery and for witchcraft meetings. Maren was detailed about this element as well as the rest: 'She also confessed that she could turn herself into a cat, but only if the Devil brought her some cat's blood to smear over her body and the fur of a cat to coat herself with. When she had done so, she was a cat'.⁸⁰⁸

Naming other women was a compulsory element of a confession produced by the influence of leading questions. In her confession, Maren named five other women. All of them were accused of witchcraft and questioned later on. For one of these, as we shall see, the denunciation had disastrous consequences.

She also confessed that her father's sister taught two women in Omgang sorcery. She also confesses that she was with the bell ringer's Sigrj, who had her small child with her, and Solwe, in Anders Persen's cellar in Kjberg where they drank beer. The bell ringer's Sigrj poured it for them, and she placed her child on a barrel while she was tapping the beer and drinking it. Afterwards, they went to Rev. Hans's cellar in Waarøen and drank a bit there. After that, *the bell ringer's Sigrj and Solwe wanted to set fire to the castle*, but they couldn't get to it because the district governor was always reading the Bible and prayed to God for mercy, so they had to leave in shame. And the same girl child confesses that Solwe cast a spell upon the foot of the reverend's wife, Karen Rasmusdatter, but that they can get no power over Reverend Hans. Having done all this, they each went their separate ways, home. [*My italics.*]⁸⁰⁹

⁸⁰⁶ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 247v.

⁸⁰⁷ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 245r.

⁸⁰⁸ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 246v.

⁸⁰⁹ SATØ, SF 10, fos. 246v–247r.

Maren's confession thus far contained all the elements of interest to the witch-hunters. One might think that this was sufficient and the questioning considered finished. But this was not the case. There was something more at stake during this linked trial. The district governor thought that the witches had conspired against him. In the quotation above Maren mentioned that after the visit to Anders Persen's cellar, Sigrid and Solve wanted to set fire to the castle. However, they were prevented because of the governor's trust in God. He also suspected the witches to have caused pains in his arms and foot, and he wanted this confirmed. One item in Maren's confession has to be seen in this context.

Moreover this little girl confesses how, two nights ago, she, Gurrj and Siigrj went to a place that was very dark, and Sigrij and the others requested from the wicked Satan a good bandage for the district governor's foot and arm so that it would heal, but the wicked one allegedly replied that they should not have it, for it would heal nobody, and they would not be let off anyway, and as for which of them had been the cause of the pains in the district governor's foot and arm, the aforementioned girl Maren confesses that it apparently was Solwe and Siigrj, as well as that woman Margrette, who recently was incarcerated at the castle.⁸¹⁰

Maren's confession about the object Solve had used in casting a spell on the district governor is amusing. The belief in physical objects used to perform sorcery seems to have been strong. Thus the possibility of showing this object to the court was used, strengthening Maren's confession.

This same girl child Maren also gives an account of how Solwe allegedly had a piece of linen with black yarn held together with witchcraft, which she [*the child*] saw Solwe tucking into a hole in her [*prison cell*] wall. Her intention was allegedly to cast a spell on the district governor with it, and when this child saw it, the Evil One gave her [*Solwe*] the likeness of a cat. And this was all done because the district governor wanted to put Solwe in ball and chains, and when she finally was shackled, she threw away the bewitched thing, but *it was subsequently diligently searched for and found and presented before the court*, and it was just as this girl child has described it. [*My italics.*]⁸¹¹

After Karen Iversdatter had confessed to a plot to kill the district governor with pins, Maren was brought in and maintained that this was true. She also confessed that after the district governor and his young woman⁸¹² had left the castle and gone on a trip on the fjord, the young woman was left behind in Wadtzøe, and Lirren, who was imprisoned at the castle, went to see the Devil to ask for something with which to cast a spell on the young woman's head.⁸¹³

Judging from the confessions, Maren seems to have been accepted by the adult suspects as able to perform sorcery at the same level as a grown-up. Maren was an accomplice of Ellen Gundersdatter, who wanted to cast a spell upon her former mistress in Bergen: 'the

⁸¹⁰ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 247r.

⁸¹¹ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 247r–247v.

⁸¹² Orig. 'jomfru' literally 'virgin'; perhaps a very young bride.

⁸¹³ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 253r.

Evil One wanted her and Ellen to go with him to Bergen, to the woman referred to, and the Wicked Satan was in the shape of a medium sized man dressed in black, and if she refused to go with him, he would take her anyway'.⁸¹⁴

The voice of Maren, a child, does not differ much from the voices of the adult suspects. She answered the leading questions thoroughly and knew how to colour her narrative with details. All the essential elements of a demonological witchcraft confession are present in her confession. She named other women, so that the trials could go on. And she gave important information about the conspiracy against the district governor, which was an important item during the panic of 1662–3. The women were accused of causing a shipwreck as well, but the accusations connected to the sickness of the district governor were important and, if possible, had to be proved. Maren's voice was strong and convincing as regards her participation in witchcraft.

7.4.4 The voice of the law

Since this was the first time children were accused during the Finnmark witchcraft trials, it is interesting to see how the legal authorities treated their cases. The local court considered the cases to be difficult:

Furthermore, since these two children, Ingeborg and Maren, have so often confessed, at Waardøeshuus Castle, that they have learnt and practised witchcraft, and also since they are held at the Castle where the district governor repeatedly urges them, and the priest daily and assiduously admonishes them, to turn away from the Evil One and be converted to the ways of God in Heaven, to no avail, for they still, according to their own confessions, have the Evil One at their sides and cannot tear themselves away from him, and since, moreover, this little girl child Karen, who is the sister of Ingeborg, who also, according to the latter's own confession, has learnt witchcraft, and they both saw it at their mother's, for the Evil One was always with them in the past, and they cannot be rid of him, no matter how the priests work on them and try to convert them to Our Lord the Christ, he will never relinquish them, since they have been given to him by the mother;

In view of such circumstances and of the clergymen's considerations, *His Royal Majesty's bailiff puts before the court whether they should not be punished with loss of life and prevented from learning more mischief from the Devil and enticing other children, at the whim of the Devil.*

Then, after indictment and responses, and in accordance with the circumstances of the case, and since the aforementioned children cannot deny having learnt witchcraft, according to their own lengthy confessions, which is self-evident, as has been recorded, and also *since they are but small underage children who have not reached an age to make their own decisions, nor have they ever been to God's altar to receive the blessed sacrament, but are utterly ignorant, this is a difficult case to decide.* We therefore, in this case, know no other course than to decide and to judge that we, in this case, defer to a superior judge, our illustrious Court of Appeal Judge. [*My italics.*]⁸¹⁵

The argument for execution seems based on the children's alleged relation to the Devil and the danger of influencing other children. Their young age and lack of Christian knowledge

⁸¹⁴ SATØ, SF 10, fo. 255r.

⁸¹⁵ SATØ, SF 10, fos. 257v–258r.

weighs in the opposite direction. The same arguments were used by the presiding judge in the Court of Appeal, who acquitted all the children.

7.4.5 Conclusion, 1662–3 panic

With the panic of the early 1660s the period of witchcraft prosecution in Finnmark was close to an end. This was the last panic, and for the rest of the period of the witchcraft trials the number was only twelve. As has been shown above, during the panic of 1662–3 new demonological ideas came to Finnmark, ideas that did not have any roots in folkloric belief. It has been possible to show that influence on the suspects from a learned person who knew demonology, Anne Friedrichsdatter Rhodius, resulted in witchcraft confessions containing ideas previously unknown in Finnmark. This suggests that the personal transference of demonological ideas might also have been strong during the earlier period of witchcraft trials in Finnmark. When the new ideas were first planted in Finnmark, the situation was probably—as Briggs among other researchers suggests – that a fusion between learned ideas and folkloric oral tradition took place, eventually resulting in the fantastic confessions found throughout the whole period of witch-hunting.⁸¹⁶ In my opinion, this strengthens the assumption that government representatives from central Denmark-Norway with knowledge of demonological ideas played an important role in transferring these ideas to Finnmark in the first place when they entered important positions in the far north of the kingdom around 1620. To understand a fusion between learned and folkloric ideas I think one has to take into consideration the fact that the local communities were oral communities, and that new ideas making their way into the mentality of the period were delivered from person to person in an oral manner. But the new ideas about the demonic pact, the witches' meeting, collective sorcery operations and shape-shifting had to be introduced to the common people in Finnmark by people from outside before these ideas could make their way into the existing mentality spheres of folk belief and thus be reproduced as part of confessions in court.

Children as suspects in witchcraft trials were found in Finnmark during the 1662–3 panic, similarly to late witchcraft trials in Sweden.⁸¹⁷ This finding in Finnmark is closely related to the new demonological ideas introduced during this decade, which stated that children could be dedicated to the Devil by their mothers and that the mother could give birth to a devil and not to a child, in other words that the Devil was the father of the child. The role

⁸¹⁶ Briggs, *Witches*, 26.

⁸¹⁷ Ankarloo, B., 'Sweden: The Mass Burnings (1668-76)', Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen, ed., *Early Modern European Witchcraft. Centres and Peripheries* (Oxford, 1993), 295–6; Östling, P-A., 'Blåkulla Journeys in Swedish Folklore', in *Arv, Nordic Yearbook of Folklore*, lxii (2006), 81–122.

of the children during this panic is most interesting, as some of them during their naming of other women contributed to further imprisonments and deaths. Among those denounced by the children was Ingeborg, the wife of Peder Krog, one of the women tortured to death. The confessions of the children were taken most seriously, and their confessions also point to the clear link between Anne Friedrichsdatter Rhodius and the new demonological ideas during this decade. Even if the children were not executed, the fact that small girls were brought before the court suspected of witchcraft shows that the climate during this panic was more extreme than the earlier witchcraft prosecutions in Finnmark. When only girls, not boys, were accused, this corresponds with the total proportion of women during this trial. When demonological ideas were strengthened, the aspect of gender also came more clearly to the fore.

The documentation of torture during the 1662–3 trials through a variety of records from the local courts shows that torture was used to an extent and with a cruelty unknown before this date. An interesting finding – and a finding that could only be discovered through close-reading of the sources – is that indirect linguistic references may be a good indication of the extent of torture, because the scribe used the expression ‘confessed willingly’ after torture had been implied. The same is found in a Swedish study by Bjørn Åstand.⁸¹⁸ Concealed ways of paraphrasing torture is also mentioned related to a study of witchcraft trials in Göta Court by Per Sörlin.⁸¹⁹ This fact also points to the methodological problems of interpretation of historical sources, as the researcher has to read in the negative or ‘between the lines’ to find out what happened. A high degree of linguistic attention is required to read the texts carefully enough.

In my view, the link between the influence of a specific person and the appearance of new demonological ideas in Finnmark during the early 1660s are findings of particular importance. Light is thrown not only on the transference of demonological ideas as such, but also on the time aspect. In this case it took only a few months from the new ideas being spread among those imprisoned to the same ideas being retold as part of confessions. This means that ideas like these spread rapidly within an oral community. In this respect the Finnmark source material offers an important contribution to witchcraft research as a whole, because such documentation is in general very difficult to find. The material from Finnmark shows its strength through the scribe’s very close rendering of the accused persons’ discourse,

⁸¹⁸ Åstrand, B., *Tortyr och pinlig förhör – våld och tvång i äldre svensk rätt* (Umeå University, Ph.D. thesis, 2000), 116–18.

⁸¹⁹ Sörlin, Per, *Trolldoms- och vidskepelseprocesserna i Göta hovrätt 1635–1754* (Umeå, 1993), 55.

as has been underlined through the narratological analysis, where the voice of the accused person has been analysed separately.

7.5 *Anders Poulsen, 1692*

7.5.1 General

The fires of the 1660s quickly burned out. The last decades of the witch trials in Finnmark were the 1670s, the 1680s and the 1690s. During the period 1670–1692 a total of 14 persons were accused of witchcraft in Finnmark. Only one death sentence was passed. Four people were acquitted, one was fined, one was banished, two cases were postponed and not reopened, two were sentenced to confession in church, one person died during custody, reason unknown, one person was killed during custody, and in one case the sentence is not known. Overall the picture is quite different from the decades before 1670. The chances of acquittal, fine, banishment or having the case postponed increased dramatically. Linked trials no longer occurred. In short, accusations of witchcraft were not treated as severely as had been the case previously in the local courts of Finnmark.

The first witchcraft trial after the 1662–1663 linked trials took place in Andersby, 1670, where a Sami woman, Sami Elli, was imprisoned. She died during custody; the cause of death is not known. Then in 1671 Magdalena Jakobsdatter from Andersby, who had also been accused of witchcraft in 1663, was acquitted. In 1672 there were two trials in West Finnmark, Marit Gundersdatter from Hammerfest and Lange Mogens Zarasen from Øksfjord, resulting in acquittal and banishment. In 1678 Synnøve Johannesdatter was sentenced to death in Vadsø and two years later Kirsten Knudsdatter was acquitted in the same place. Then two trials in West Finnmark, against Karen Klemitsdatter and Peder Gundersen, in 1680, resulted in acquittal and a fine. Five years later Gunder Tommersen was tried in Hammerfest; the sentence is unknown. In 1688 and 1689 two women were tried in Sandskjær for divination; Karen Nilsdatter and Birgitte Eriksdatter. Both cases were postponed and not reopened. In 1690 two women were tried in Kiberg, Karen Simensdatter and Maren Nilsdatter, and both were sentenced to confession in church. Lastly, Anders Poulsen was tried in Vadsø in 1692. In the following I would like to focus on his trial.

7.5.2 The trial

The trial of Anders Poulsen from Torne Lapland⁸²⁰ in Sweden is indeed an unusual one. It has attracted attention from scholars and has been written about by among others Bergh, Niemi, Willumsen, Granquist and Hagen.⁸²¹ The existing scholarship so far has contributed in a valuable way to the exploration of Poulsen's case by focusing on his use of Sami magic, especially his use of the rune drum, as an authentic source of knowledge about Sami shamanism. The following analysis will add to the previous studies by the narratological approach, which enables me to see the voice of Anders Poulsen in relation to the other voices heard during the trial, as well as to question the reliability of Anders Poulsen's confession.

Anders Poulsen was an old Sami shaman.⁸²² He possessed a rune drum, which was taken from him on 7 December 1691. He was interrogated 'in his chamber' about this drum and his confession was written down on 8 December.⁸²³ The trial took place in Vadsø on 9 and 10 February 1692 under Deputy Appeal Court Judge⁸²⁴ Niels Knag of Stavanger Court of Law, bailiff and magistrate of Finnmark.⁸²⁵ The court was served by a jury of Norwegians and a jury of Samis. A translator was used to translate from Sami to Norwegian. The court was presided over by Herr Chancellery Secretary and Regional Governor of Waardøehuus District, Hans H. Lilienskiold, and the court was attended by the deputy bailiff, Olle Anderssen, and by the Sami constable⁸²⁶ Pouel Iffuersen and other honest persons.

7.5.3 The voice of the law

The voice of the law is heard at the beginning and at the end of the trial, whereas the whole long middle section is the narrative of Anders Poulsen, almost a life story. Anders Poulsen was presented before the court by the deputy bailiff Olle Andersen

⁸²⁰ Orig. 'Lapmarch'. Literally this word means in Norwegian 'The Sami field'. It is an area on the Swedish side of the border, around the lake Torneträsk and the river Torne river.

⁸²¹ Bergh, 'Til ild', 144; Niemi, *Vadsøs historie*, 346–349; Niemi, E., 'Anders Paulsen (Poulsen, Pouelsen)', in *Norsk biografisk leksikon* (Oslo, 1999), 84; Willumsen, *Trollkvinne*, (1984), 56–58; Granquist, K., 'Thou shalt have no other Gods before me (Exodus 20:3). Witchcraft and Superstition trials in 17th- and 18th century Swedish Lapland' in P. Skiöld & K. Kram (ed.): *Kulturkonfrontation i Lappmarken* (Umeå, 1998), 13–21; Hagen, R., 'Harmløs dissenter eller djevlesk trollmann?', www.ub.uit.no/munin/bitstream.

⁸²² The Sami word for shaman is 'noaidi'.

⁸²³ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 1r.

⁸²⁴ This means that he had got the expectancy of the position.

⁸²⁵ He possessed for some years the bailiff position as well as the magistrate position. As these two positions were connected with different aspects of the legal apparatus and the function of the legal official in the courtroom, his double position became problematic. Therefore the deputy bailiff had to run the case.

⁸²⁶ Orig. 'lensmand', an administrative official under the bailiff, at the lowest level of local administration in Norway. He represented the local police authority in Norway from the fourteenth century onwards.

on the grounds that *he has owned and used an instrument they call rune drum*,⁸²⁷ with which he has practised that wicked and ungodly art of witchcraft. The said rune drum was taken from him on 7 December passato [*last*] and is now placed on the court table, and the deputy bailiff requests that this same Sami's deposition about this rune drum, which he made in his presence and that of the deputy appeal court judge, Niels Knag, and the Sami constable, Pouel Ifuersen, who interpreted his words on 8 December passato, should be put to him, and it is read out loud, so that it can be ascertained whether he abides by it, *and if so, the deputy bailiff assumes that it confirms his practice of witchcraft and the abuse of God's sacred name, something he claims should not go unpunished*, and the said Anders Poulsen's previously made deposition, which is read to him now in court, is as follows. [*My italics.*]⁸²⁸

This trial is different in several respects to the witchcraft trials referred to earlier. The only accusation against Anders Poulsen was that he had used the rune drum and thereby practised the 'ungodly art of witchcraft'. He had neither been denounced by another person, nor accused of having entered a pact with the Devil, nor accused of any participation at a witches' meeting, nor accused of the deaths of humans or animals, nor accused of taking part in plots against the regional governor, nor accused of causing shipwrecks or being responsible for local disasters like chasing the fish from the shores or destroying the harvest. His art was an individual one, practised according to his personal knowledge of using the rune drum.

The voice of the law, in the words of the deputy bailiff Olle Andersen, in this last witchcraft trial in Finnmark, reveals that the deputy bailiff himself considered Anders Poulsen's use of the rune drum ungodly and punishable. If Anders Poulsen abided by his previous confession, the deputy bailiff 'assumed' that this confirmed his practice of witchcraft and his abuse of God's name. The same deputy bailiff 'claimed' that this practice should not go unpunished. The use of verbs reveals Olle Andersen's attitude towards the practice of Sami sorcery and the use of the rune drum. The denial of the pact of baptism is rewritten in this trial, the phrase 'the abuse of God's sacred name' echoing the common phrase from earlier decades, in which the legal discourse repeated that the confessing persons had 'given themselves from God to the Devil'. Early in the trial words like 'devilish' and 'godless' were mentioned in relation to his mother: 'His immensely godless and devilish art, which he has learnt in the family, from his godless mother, a woman he says was not of the right faith in God in Heaven, like other people'.⁸²⁹ This type of rhetoric becomes stronger towards the end of the trial, during the discussion of the verdict.

The account of the confiscation of the rune drum on 7 December is given in neutral language, although covering a dramatic situation, which must have been quite an event in the local community. In retrospect we learn what happened on 7 and 8 December, and it also becomes clear that Anders Poulsen did not speak Norwegian and therefore was dependent

⁸²⁷ Orig. 'Runne bomen'.

⁸²⁸ SATØ, SF 25, fos. 1r-1v.

⁸²⁹ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 7v.

upon a translator during the interrogation. Anders Poulsen's rune drum is kept in the Sami Collections in Karasjok in Finnmark. It is a small, round drum, well-kept and with clear symbols, as seen in the illustration below, see Figure 19.

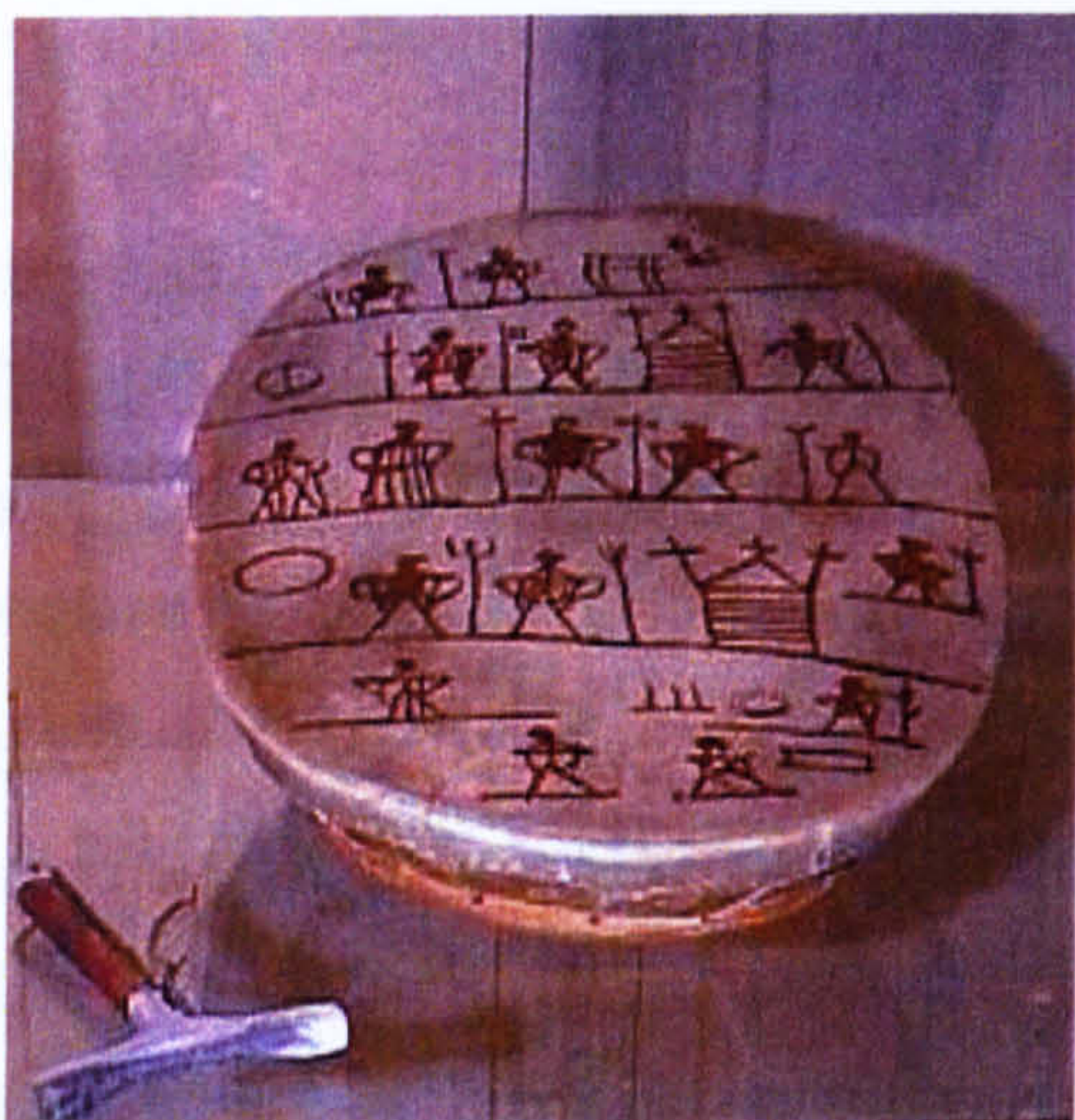


Figure 19 Anders Poulsen's rune drum, Finnmark

This drum is one of about 70 rune drums preserved today. It is described by E. Manker.⁸³⁰ It is made of wood underneath and a reindeer hide is tightly pulled over it. The symbols are painted with bark colour.

The second time the rune drum is mentioned during the trial by the officials of the law, it is as an introduction to the detailed description of its construction and the imagery given by Anders Poulsen: 'The rune drum which is here present and which was made by him, according to his previous confession, *though he denies this now*, is quite worn by diligent use'.⁸³¹ [*My italics.*] During the interrogation on 8 December, Anders Poulsen admitted to having made the rune drum himself, but now, on 2 February, he denied this. The court still seems to have believed that he had made the rune drum and that his denial was made in order to make his crime a bit milder. From a comment from the court just before the detailed interpretation of the symbols of the rune drum starts, it seems clear, however, that on 2 February Anders Poulsen again admitting to having made the rune drum himself, 'In the first row are, *now* that he has admitted to having made the drum himself...'. [*My italics.*]⁸³²

As the description of the rune drum is rendered in indirect speech, the voice of the law can be heard in single words inserted in the sentences. For instance, the description of the

⁸³⁰ Manker, E., *Die lappische Zaubertrommel*, ii (Uppsala, 1950) 430–40.

⁸³¹ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 2r.

⁸³² SATØ, SF 25, fo. 2r.

figure of the 'Engil', belonging to the second row, is rendered in this way, 'The figure of a human, whom he calls Engil, *supposedly* the Holy Spirit'. [*My italics.*]⁸³³ The word 'supposedly' creates distance from the tale on the part of the scribe. He uses a word that might have cast doubt on what Anders Poulsen was explaining. It is clear that the legal officials questioned Anders Poulsen's interpretation of the figures on the rune drum. The same expression is used about the representation of a figure in the fourth row, manna: 'It is *supposed* to be the moon'.⁸³⁴ Certainly a circle could have a lot of other interpretations, so the distancing word used by the scribe here is to the point. Another way on the part of the scribe to create distance from the story was to give a description of Anders Poulsen while he was drumming, 'all the while looking at his figures, and the ring danced up and down and he knocked with his hammer and uttered these words to the gods (...)'.⁸³⁵ The sight of the shaman at work has for a while distracted the scribe from merely recording in an objective way. In addition he gives a glimpse of the situation in the courtroom, which must have been amazing, seen through his own eyes.

Traces of questions asked during the interrogation are seen throughout the whole confession, due to brief mentions of the questions. These echo the voice of the law, although indirectly. When Anders Poulsen had given his description of three figures in the third row representing the Christmas days, he was obviously asked if he had anything more to add, but answered that he 'would say no more about the days'.⁸³⁶ We find another trace of a question after a description of the symbol of the moon in the fourth row: 'He would confess no more'. The last traced question during his confession deals with lifting Sami spells: '*When asked* he says that when a Sami spell has been cast on someone (...)'. [*My italics.*]⁸³⁷ The traced questions suggest that the legal officials were eager to know as much as possible about the symbols on the drum, and in the courtroom they asked Anders Poulsen to add to his previous confession. In particular they were eager to know about the art of a Sami sorcerer, for instance lifting spells. But they were also interested in knowing about the dark effects of the rune drum, namely when the drum did not give answers implying luck and good fortune: 'But he will not *under any terms tell us* how the gods reply when the ring moves otherwise than in the same direction as the sun'. [*My italics.*]⁸³⁸

⁸³³ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 3r.

⁸³⁴ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 3v.

⁸³⁵ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 5r.

⁸³⁶ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 3v.

⁸³⁷ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 5r.

⁸³⁸ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 5v.

Towards the end of the trial it becomes clear what the legal officials have really been looking for while listening to Anders Poulsen. Before the verdict was delivered, the court went through the whole confession again and emphasised certain elements, especially that his art was a devilish art, by which the figures of the drum ‘induce him to believe, *at the devil's whim*, the acts and signs he asks about and looks for, which according to him are indeed confirmed by events’.⁸³⁹ [*My italics.*] The figures in the fifth row are rendered by the court thus: ‘in the fifth row he has a number of devils and the oldest devil's wife and the presumed instruments found in hell. In particular there is a devil who is supposed to represent disease, and he says it can kill humans, *and he worships many of these figures and symbols*’.⁸⁴⁰ [*My italics.*] The court found his practice ‘extremely punishable’,

particularly that he paints the holy trinity, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost whom he by officiating with his incantations (...) and abuse so grievously profanes, scorns, desecrates and outrages, and that he recites the Lord's Prayer and makes the sign of the holy cross over himself and over the rune drum when preparing to play on it, and the reference he makes of his pictures as representations of God, God's created elements (...) and finally that he paints hell and the devils, and *he is particularly reluctant to explain the nature of his dealings with them*.⁸⁴¹ [*My italics.*]

The court had earlier stressed Anders Poulsen's reluctance to give details about the figures on the rune drum representing the Devil, as he himself had explained. Now these figures were seen as proving his godless and devilish art, which he had learnt from his mother. A distinction is being drawn between Samis who profess Christianity and those who do not. Poulsen himself clearly did confess Christianity. His son Christopher, who claimed to have conversations with Christ by talking with stones, is also mentioned as part of the family. The court found Anders Poulsen's art to be ‘most outrageous, particularly in such desolate areas as these, where a great many people are unenlightened as to the true faith and worship of God, for which reason, many of them when subjected to something are far more prone to *seek advice from such witch people* than to turn to God in prayer and invocation’.⁸⁴² [*My italics.*] For the first time during the trial, the word ‘witch’ is used, and it is stated that is highly necessary to ‘make a hideous example of suchlike godlessness’.⁸⁴³ However, since such acts of worship of false gods ‘as Anders Poulsen has voluntarily confessed to having practised and depended on, are not referred to in the statutes as punishable acts’, the regional governor decided and found it advisable, ‘after *my* having consulted with His Honour about the

⁸³⁹ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 6v.

⁸⁴⁰ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 6v.

⁸⁴¹ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 7v.

⁸⁴² SATØ, SF 25, fo. 8r.

⁸⁴³ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 8r.

matter',⁸⁴⁴ that the case was deferred until a reply from the superior authorities in Copenhagen was forthcoming. The magistrate, Niels Knag, here enters the records in the first person, which is very rare in this type of document, and he must have had his connection with Copenhagen and the King in mind during this formulation. While the court waited for a reply from Copenhagen, Anders Poulsen should be kept in secure custody.

The court found that Anders Poulsen's property should be delivered to the deputy bailiff, unless an adequate guarantee or bail was produced. Subsequently an inventory, containing among other things reindeer and reindeer sleighs, was presented to the court.

The answer from Copenhagen never reached Vadsø. On 22 February, another hearing of the court took place in Vadsø, with regard to the killing of Anders Poulsen on 11 February. He was killed with an axe while he was asleep by a mentally disturbed person, Villum Gundersen, who had been working for the regional governor for a few years. Villum Gundersen admitted to the killing, and said 'there were no reasons for this other than that he felt this same Sami was a sorcerer and that he deserved to die'.⁸⁴⁵ Witnesses were brought before the court, to testify about the killing. When questioned as to whether he felt guilty about the killing and whether he deserved to die, he 'offered no sensible reply, but was utterly silent'.⁸⁴⁶ The heirs of Anders Poulsen, who demanded the death sentence for Villum Gundersen, did not receive any compensation for their father, since he 'was a witchcraft practitioner and idol worshipper who had forfeited his body to be burnt at the stake'.⁸⁴⁷ This formulation, as it was heard in the voice of the law after Anders Poulsen's trial, in my interpretation suggests that Anders Poulsen's practice was basically looked upon as witchcraft, to be punished accordingly, even if Poulsen was never convicted and his case was referred to Copenhagen.

7.5.4 The voice of the accused person

The voice of Anders Poulsen is heard partly as the narrator of the document written on 8 December, read out loud in the court, and partly as a commentator on this document. The written document contains information about his place of birth and his taxpaying both in Nordland and in Finnmark, the two northernmost Norwegian regions. He mentioned his many married children who lived in Finnmark, who paid tax to the king. Only one of his children, Christopher, was, according to him, a good doctor, though 'he did not know *the rune drum's*

⁸⁴⁴ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 8r.

⁸⁴⁵ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 11v.

⁸⁴⁶ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 14r.

⁸⁴⁷ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 14r.

art of doctoring, but he could talk with stones, thereby obtaining answers to what he asked'. [*My italics.*]⁸⁴⁸ Anders Poulsen had emphasised the taxpaying, both on his own and on his children's behalf. Even if his rune drum was taken from him and he knew that the interrogation had to do with his practice of the rune drum art, he seemed to have felt it necessary to introduce his confession by underlining that both he and his children had been lawfully paying taxes to the king.

In Anders Poulsen's own words, the art of using the rune drum is first mentioned as the 'art of doctoring', later as 'wisdom':

He says his age is a narrow century, which is five times twenty years, and that he derived his *wisdom* with the drum from his mother in his youth, and that when he first started learning, he was *wild and reckless*, though not reckless enough to harm any man, and *God promised him* that he would know good fortune all his life, but he said *he did not see God* when the promise was made to him; he only felt such thoughts in his chest while he was learning. [*My italics.*]⁸⁴⁹

The whole range of words used by Anders Poulsen shows that he not only looked on the use of the rune drum as related to curing and healing, but that he included something wider when talking about the rune drum's doctorship. His mention of his son as a 'doctor', talking with stones to get the sought-for answers, and the doctoring connected to the rune drum, suggests that Anders Poulsen includes in the word 'doctoring' the rune drum's ability to give answers when questions are posed, so to speak the rune drum's ability to enable him to function as an oracle. This would be a very wide definition of 'doctoring', and certainly one denoting the rune drummer as someone having enormous authority.

Poulsen mentioned that he was 'wild and reckless' when he was learning the art of the rune drum, and later he said that his mother 'had been insane for nine years' when she learnt it.⁸⁵⁰ Most probably Poulsen was referring to the experience of the trance that is supposed to be significant for the competence of a shaman. The use of the rune drum enabled the drummer to enter a trance and go on a 'journey' to far away places to look for people, and to other 'levels of reality'. Wolfgang Behringer has called this separation of the soul from the body and its trip to certain places 'the constitutive element for any great shaman'.⁸⁵¹ According to Rita Pollan, a historian of religion who has been studying traditional Sami religion and culture, such a trip could take one and a half hours.⁸⁵²

⁸⁴⁸ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 1v.

⁸⁴⁹ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 1v.

⁸⁵⁰ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 1v.

⁸⁵¹ Behringer, W., *Shaman of Oberstdorf* (Charlottesville, 1998), 143.

⁸⁵² Pollan, B., *Samiske beretninger*, (Oslo, 1997), 22.

Anders Poulsen describes his learning of the art of using the rune drum as directly related to God. In the same way as the accused witches during the earlier witch-hunt confessed that they gave themselves to the Devil and often got a promise from him that they would have something in return, Anders Poulsen said that God was the one promising him good fortune. When the name of God is mentioned early in his confession, it might be to underline that his art is not a devilish one, but a godly one, thus evading the idea that his use of the rune drum should be seen as witchcraft.

But when he commented on his previous confession, he denied some of his previous statements. About his mother, the one who had taught him, he said that 'she often spoke to God'.⁸⁵³ But afterwards, when he named a person in Torne Lappmark, Anders Pedersen, as the one who had taught him and who had made his rune drum, Anders Poulsen said that 'the said Sami and his mother shared the same faith'.⁸⁵⁴ Thus some contradictions are clear from the very beginning of Anders Poulsen's confession with regard to who taught him the use of the rune drum and who made the rune drum. These contradictions might suggest that he was trying to tell the deputy bailiff what he wanted to hear. It might also be that he confessed what he thought was appropriate for him to confess, to make the treatment in court less severe. The denial of the old Sami faith seems to have been particularly important for Anders Poulsen to underline, something that was repeated several times during his confession, related to himself and with an emphasis on Christian interpretation of the symbols in contrast to his mention of his ungodly mother.

The detailed rendering of the symbols of the rune drum is written in the records in indirect speech. What 'he says...' occupies most of the pages of the court records, which is an interesting source to study today for scholars from different disciplines. It contains a long and detailed description of how the rune drum was made and an interpretation of all the symbols of the rune drum, five rows in all. In the first place, Anders Poulsen confessed that the symbols were painted with his blood; later he said they were painted with boiled water laced with alder bark. Most of the figures have Sami names. The rune drum is made from a pine tree that has been hollowed out so that it is a large, rounded, deep bowl, 'and he says it will not work unless it is made of pine'.⁸⁵⁵ The skin of the drum head is reindeer skin, and it is

⁸⁵³ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 2r.

⁸⁵⁴ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 2r.

⁸⁵⁵ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 2r.

decorated with two fox ears, a fox snout and a fox claw. When the rune drum is played with a hammer, a hollow ring⁸⁵⁶ dances on the drumskin and eventually stops at one of the figures.

In the first row there are three symbols: the figure of a human called Ilmaris, who is tempest and bad weather, the figure of a human called Diermis, who is thunder, and the 'figure of a wild reindeer whom he calls Gvodde; it is a wild reindeer which, when God is prayed to, gives good fortune in the hunt of wild reindeer'.⁸⁵⁷ Anders Poulsen repeated, when he was interpreting the symbols, 'When God is prayed to (...)'.⁸⁵⁸ In the original historical document, 'God' is consistently written with a small initial letter. Presumably, the small 'g' implies that the scribe was rejecting the idea that it was the Christian 'God'. Due to the contents of Poulsen's confession, it seems that the God referred to here, is the One Christian God. And there is no doubt that the Christian tradition influenced Anders Poulsen's description of the symbols of his rune drum. But it has to be taken into consideration, as Brita Pollan has pointed out in general terms, that the language of the rune drum as a religious language seems to have been flexible; new contexts and approaches made possible new interpretations of the drums' fixed structures and figures.⁸⁵⁹ This might be also seen from the picture of Anders Poulsen's rune drum above. And one of the religious insights Anders Poulsen pointed out in his confession was that God is almighty. God is in a position to delegate his power to his helpers, represented on the rune drum, but the helpers can act only on the command of God. It is also interesting to notice that the rune drum can be used for better or for worse, but the name of God is only mentioned in connection with the good effects of the rune drum:

When God is prayed to, Diermis is helpful in that when there are floods and a lot of rain, he will call back the weather, and this *Diermis has no power unless God gives it to him*. He now also confessed that *Diermis can cause evil and bad weather that damages ships and boats, but Diermis can also make good weather again and prevent mishaps when God lets him*. [*My italics.*]⁸⁶⁰

Similarly, Anders Poulsen's comment on the figure of Ilmaris underlines that when God is prayed to, Ilmaris is able to call back or drive away bad weather that has been conjured. However, he is also able to make bad weather, 'but he says it is *sinful* to ask for that'.⁸⁶¹ The use of the word 'sinful', which is a word frequently used in Christian discourse, suggests that there is a border between good and bad use of the rune drum, even if it might be used for both

⁸⁵⁶ Orig. 'dechel', in modern Norwegian 'deksel'.

⁸⁵⁷ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 2v.

⁸⁵⁸ SATØ, SF 25, fos. 2r–2v.

⁸⁵⁹ Pollan, *Samiske beretninger*, 24.

⁸⁶⁰ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 2v.

⁸⁶¹ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 2v.

purposes. It is the same with the figure of the wild reindeer – it may give good or bad luck. It ‘gives good fortune in the hunt for wild reindeer and when the rune drum is played. If the ring will not dance for this reindeer, the one who asks for good hunting will not get any reindeer, no matter how hard he tries’. Anders Poulsen’s declarations are ambiguous. On one hand he underlines the blessings given by God through the figures of the drum, the positive effects of practising drumming, on the other hand he reveals that the drum might be used for evil purposes. Another interpretation might be that he has developed his own quite sophisticated theodicy, where Diermis guarantees good as well as evil.

In the second row there are five figures. First a round circle pierced by a line, called Peive, that is the sun, then a figure called the child Jumal, God’s child, or God’s son the Christ. Then the figure of a human called Juma-Etziem, God the father. Then the figure of a church, called Dom Kirch.⁸⁶² At last the figure of a human, called Engil,⁸⁶³ representing the Holy Spirit. Even more than those on the first row, these symbols are interpreted by Anders Poulsen as Christian symbols, although, as I have pointed out above, the voice of the law seems to doubt this frame of interpretation. The first symbol, Peive, the sun, is a bit different from the others in this row, as it is related to the blessings of good weather: ‘When God is prayed to it will yield sunny and beautiful weather and fair air, particularly when the reindeer are calving and when grain and grass are supposed to grow, and generally good weather when this is asked for’.⁸⁶⁴ The next four symbols in this row are religious symbols with Christian connotations. These are all explained within the framework of Christian discourse: God’s son Christ absolves of all sin, God the father ‘castigates for all sins and other than that helps and provides, commands and punishes when asked to’⁸⁶⁵ and Engil, supposedly the Holy Spirit. In the same row there is a symbol of a cathedral, which gives absolution, peace of mind and a Christian death, ‘and whether you die or are alive, that same church will help’.⁸⁶⁶ The language Anders Poulsen used to interpret the figures referred to the Christian trinity and mirrored central notions of the Christian Church: God as a strong, blessing and punishing father, Christ giving absolution of all sins, and the Holy Spirit: ‘When prayed to he will absolve of all sin, so that you become a new and clean man, when he wants to help’.⁸⁶⁷ The interpretation of the Holy Spirit is very much like the interpretation of the figure of Christ, so it might be that Anders Poulsen was not certain of the difference here. When describing the

⁸⁶² Norwegian: ‘domkirke’, Swedish: ‘domkyrka’, German: ‘Domkirche’.

⁸⁶³ This word means in Norwegian ‘angel’.

⁸⁶⁴ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 2v.

⁸⁶⁵ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 3r.

⁸⁶⁶ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 3r.

⁸⁶⁷ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 3r.

cathedral as giving absolution, peace of mind and a Christian death, several fields of Christian religious life are touched upon.

However, the ambiguity in this discourse comes to the surface again when a presumable ‘shadow’ question – a question possible to reconstruct from the discourse in the records - is answered by Anders Poulsen. The legal officials were apparently interested in knowing what kind of God he was worshipping. He answered that ‘The God that is worshipped, *as has often been reiterated*, are those figures that he has painted, the deities, about whom he says his mother taught him’.⁸⁶⁸ [*My italics.*] Anders Poulsen seems to have been of the opinion that during his confession he had often repeated what kind of God he had been worshipping, understood as the Christian God. But at the same time he referred to what his mother had taught him, a mother who was said not to share the Christian faith. The contradiction in Anders Poulsen’s confession is a reason for becoming suspicious of his interpretation, even if he himself denied worshipping pagan gods.

The ambiguity and the blurred borders between different ‘reality levels’ become even more striking when Anders Poulsen interprets the figures’ staffs, called ‘Juncher sabbe’ or ‘Herr Sabbe’, painted on the rune drum. These were ‘Juncher’s staff’ or ‘the staff of great lords, for he says that just as the masters on earth hold staffs, so do these persons’.⁸⁶⁹ Juncher – meaning a young nobleman – was a term used for the district governor at Vardøhus castle and a title Anders Poulsen certainly related to the highest authority under the king. In Anders Poulsen’s interpretation, these figures were actual human lords or government officials.

In the third row there are five figures: a human figure called St Anna, a figure of Maria, the mother of Christ, and three figures called Julle⁸⁷⁰ Peive, Julle Herr, ‘they are Christmas days, Christmas masters who rule over Christmas’.⁸⁷¹ For the first time some of the figures of the rune drum are interpreted as females. The first of the two figures, St Anna, he said was ‘Mary’s sister who assists Mary when she gives succour, but in other respects she can do nothing unless Mary wishes her to’.⁸⁷² Conventionally St Anne was Mary’s mother. The second female figure is given various names by Anders Poulsen: Mary, Jumal Enne, Jumal Ache: ‘This is Maria, the mother of Christ, God’s wife, and when prayed to she will in particular help women in confinement, and she is conducive to absolution from sin and she is

⁸⁶⁸ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 3r.

⁸⁶⁹ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 3r.

⁸⁷⁰ ‘jul’ means Christmas in Norwegian.

⁸⁷¹ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 3v.

⁸⁷² Anne was Mary’s mother. SATØ, SF 25, fo. 3v.

worshipped at God's side'.⁸⁷³ Here we have two female symbols, the first one given a saint's name and the second being God's wife. This is certainly not in accordance with standard Protestant religious doctrine, and probably shows Anders Poulsen's lack of knowledge about these Biblical persons. However, to underline the function of the female symbols as helpers seems to be appropriate to the task of a shaman, a person who was often contacted in problematic situations. The fact that women were seen as suitable helpers for those who were in need, and especially in connection with confinement, probably reflected questions Anders Poulsen had often been asked about as a shaman, so this might be seen as an echo of his clients' questions.

About the figures representing the three Christmas days, Anders Poulsen explained:

They are Christmas days, Christmas masters who rule over Christmas. Oucht Jule Peiv is the master of the first Christmas day, Gought Jule Peive is the master of the second Christmas day, Gvolme Jul Peive is the master of the third Christmas day. If anybody defiles these days, God will punish them, but if somebody honours them and then prays to God for something, then these days are exhibited to God and it will be submitted that so and so has honoured the days and that God will help for that very reason.⁸⁷⁴

This explanation about keeping the Christmas holidays might or might not have been in accordance with the teaching of the church. God is described as blessing those who keep his commandments and punishing those who do not. But spirits or entities as 'masters' of days does not sound very orthodox, so this might well be a mixture of several aspects.⁸⁷⁵

In the fourth row five figures are painted: a round circle representing the moon, the figures of two men going to church, the figure of the church he belongs to and a figure of a man coming to church from the opposite direction. About the symbol of the moon, Manna, Anders Poulsen explained: 'When God is worshipped it shines brightly and the nocturnal weather will be fine even if there is a heavy cover of clouds'.⁸⁷⁶ The other figures in the row represent the church, Kirche,⁸⁷⁷ persons going to church and giving to the church. The logic about giving to the church is interesting: 'Yet, he adds, nobody gives unless they receive help' and the kind of trouble he mentioned was related to reindeer and illness. Again the interpretation of the figures was influenced by the preaching of the church, that people should attend services and give money to the church.

In the fifth and last row there are seven figures – all of them have to do with the Devil: first a woman who is supposed to be the wife of the bound devil, the second a devil who kills

⁸⁷³ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 3v.


⁸⁷⁴ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 3v.


⁸⁷⁵ In the Scottish withcraft trials in Aberdeenshire 1597, Andrew Man mentioned the word 'Christsonday', which resemble a bit Anders Poulson's rhetoric.


⁸⁷⁶ SATØ, SF 25, fos. 3v–4r.

⁸⁷⁷ In Norwegian this word means 'church'.

people and who is disease, the third a figure of the devil 'who is on the loose now and rules in Hell and floats about in the world'.⁸⁷⁸ The seventh figure, called Hvenaales Gvolisis, is 'a bound devil in chains, the one who was bound up when God created the world'.⁸⁷⁹ Then the fourth, fifth and sixth symbols are drawn in the records, like this:

4 A figure that looks like this , which he calls Hilvet Tol, the flames of Hell, the fire that consumes people's souls in Hell.

5 A figure that looks like this , which he calls Hilved Tarve Giedme, Hell's tar cauldron, in which people's souls in Hell are boiled.

A figure that looks like this , which he calls Hilvet Haufd, Hell's grave, into which all people who believe in the Devil are thrown, and God is the one to throw them.⁸⁸⁰

No doubt, the interpretation of these different devils was coloured by the Bible and the notions about hell and punishment after death found there, although here we hear that people's *souls* are consumed by the flames of hell and boiled in the tar cauldron of hell, not their bodies, and the image thus deviates from common visual representations of the boiling water of hell. There are several devils: one who is disease, one who is loose, for whom Anders Poulsen has no name, and one tied, and the explanation for how one of the devils escaped is very earth-bound: 'This devil escaped when God tied up the other devil, described below, and God was wearing iron shoes when he found this one and trampled on him so he disappeared in a great bog'.⁸⁸¹ During the explanation of the devils, Anders Poulsen touched upon God's creation of the world and the gruesome punishment in hell for those who believed in the Devil. There were no comments from the legal officials during this part of Anders Poulsen's interpretation of the rune drum symbols, even if the material about the devils must have been regarded as extremely important.

Anders Poulsen then continued by explaining how he used the hammer and the hollow ring, called Palm, to get 'answers' from the rune drum. When he used the hammer, the ring danced, and it mattered which way it danced around the drumskin. If the ring danced anti-clockwise the person he was playing for would have bad luck, 'but if it gets so far down that it stops near them under the last line in the fifth row, God is angry with whoever he is playing for, and that person will have to pray a great deal to God before the ring will go back again, so

⁸⁷⁸ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 4r.

⁸⁷⁹ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 4v.

⁸⁸⁰ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 4v.

⁸⁸¹ SATØ, SF 25, fos. 4r–4v.

that God shows him that he is a sinful person'.⁸⁸² As the last line in the fifth row deals with the torment of hell, this was obviously an unfortunate place for the ring to stop.

Then a very special event took place in court. Anders Poulsen picked up the rune drum and played the drum, 'having first crossed himself' and then made the sign of the cross over the drum, and recited the Lord's Prayer in the Karelian⁸⁸³ language, before he continued with his own prayer. While drumming, he was looking at the figures and the ring and confessing the sins of the person he was pleading for.

He was afterwards asked whether he could lift a Sami spell, to which he answered that he could 'lift the spell with the aid of his gods and cast it on the one who cast the spell in the first place', and he demonstrated how he did that. For the first time Anders Poulsen here mentioned his 'gods' in the plural. He demonstrated how he lifted spells, playing the drum until the ring landed on one of the devils in the fifth row. Then the spell released its hold on the person who was struck and shifted to the one who had cast the spell. He said he had helped many a person in Swedish Lapland, but nobody in Norway. In the same way he demonstrated how the ring danced to one of the devils if a thief should be punished, 'and then he plays for such a long time that God punishes the thief who has stolen, so that he withers and shrivels into no more than a dry tree'.⁸⁸⁴ This part of Anders Poulsen's confession, where the traced question shows that he was particularly asked about his ability to lift Sami spells, has to do with the ability of the shaman to use the drum in specific ways that Samis traditionally had a reputation for mastering. But even here, when finding a thief for instance, he underlined that God was the one who punished. He also said that by prayer to God, when he played the rune drum, 'he can provide good conditions for the reindeer so that wolves do not kill them, and good fortune in other ways. When helping women in confinement, he plays the rune drum, and he learns what is God's will when the ring dances on the rune drum'.⁸⁸⁵ Anders Poulsen was very eager to show that he was only doing well with his playing, and he said that Christ had forbidden both him and his son to do harm. He claimed that he could get an answer from the drum when he held it high into the air, 'just as two persons do when they talk to each other'.⁸⁸⁶

The clearest indication of Anders Poulsen's fear comes at the end of his confession, where he declared that even if he could officiate in all the above-mentioned matters, 'he

⁸⁸² SATØ, SF 25, fo. 5r.

⁸⁸³ In this context the word means Finnish.

⁸⁸⁴ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 5v.

⁸⁸⁵ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 5v.

⁸⁸⁶ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 6r.

would not admit to having used or practised any of them here in this country, and he protested his innocence'.⁸⁸⁷ He also stated that he had not forsworn God in heaven or his Christian faith, and when worshipping the depicted gods, he believed they were all God in heaven. And 'since the authorities objected to his using the rune drum, he would relinquish it now, and believe in God in Heaven just like other people'.⁸⁸⁸ The last remark indicates that in spite of his frequent reassurance about his belief in the One Christian God, he still believed in the old traditional Sami religion.

The next day Anders Poulsen was called to court again, and he abided by his previous confession. But he commented that when he learned the rune drum craft from his mother, he himself had not asked to learn. And he repeated once more that he had done no harm with his art and he only wanted to help people in distress.

7.5.5 The reliability of Anders Poulsen's confession

Is Anders Poulsen a reliable narrator? Most of his trial is a long narrative rendered in indirect speech, a narrative where his voice is heard, giving information about his life and about the rune drum. The information he gives of a biographical nature is presumably correct, but is the interpretation of the symbols of the rune drum correct seen in relation to the original use of the rune drum as part of the Sami traditional religion? First of all, his use of the rune drum, demonstrated in the courtroom, was certainly convincing. This was a man with long experience in rune drumming and one who showed emotions: with tears running down his cheek he lifted the rune drum up into the air and played it, so that all those present in court were able to see.⁸⁸⁹ In addition, the occasions on which the rune drum was used were also probably correctly narrated. Several scholars have interpreted the court records of Anders Poulsen's trial as the most comprehensive contemporary source we have about Sami religious practice, especially the use of the rune drum, and one of the most important sources for the knowledge of Sami shamanism.⁸⁹⁰ This might be true for the elements of the confession that have to do with symbols of nature: the sun, the moon, the tempest, the thunder and the wild reindeer. We also find in Anders Poulsen's confession interpretations related to reindeer keeping, hunting and other aspects of Sami traditional ways of life in the area of

⁸⁸⁷ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 6r.

⁸⁸⁸ SATØ, SF 25, fo. 6r.

⁸⁸⁹ From a contemporary source by Niels Knag dated 15 December 1693 it becomes clear that Anders Poulsen was moved and shed tears in court, Appendix to Thott no. 1735, NLD.

⁸⁹⁰ Niemi, E., 'Hans Hansen Lilienskiold – embetsmann, vitenskapsmann og opprører' in *Portretter fra norsk historie* (Oslo 1993), 61; Niemi, 'Anders Paulsen (Poulsen, Pouelsen)', 84; Rydving, H., *The End of drum-time: Religious Change among the Lule Saami, 1670s-1740s* (Uppsala, 1995), 35–42; Hagen, 'Samisk', 2.

Nordkalotten.⁸⁹¹ No doubt this document is a fabulous source to the understanding of Sami culture and in particular the art of a Sami shaman. However, there is a question whether Anders Poulsen's confession as a whole can be taken at face value as far as information about the Sami traditional use of the rune drum is concerned. As the analysis above has shown, Anders Poulsen was trying to adjust the content of his confession to the doctrine of the Protestant church, a doctrine he did not know in detail. On the one hand, by use of repetition of standard religious phrases he tried to convince the court that the one God he worshipped was the Christian god. On the other, his abrupt changes from proclaiming belief in one god to proclaiming belief in several gods made his confession inconsistent and unreliable. His last remark in particular, promising that from now on he would believe in the right Christian God, showed that he had in fact belonged to the old Sami traditional religion his whole life, as had his mother before him. As other information about Sami religion and Sami magic during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (for instance Olaus Magnus' history) comes mostly from travellers going north who provide outsiders' views of Sami culture, it is difficult to obtain knowledge about what in fact were the attitudes of a Sami shaman towards Christianity and towards the old Sami religion at this time.

Anders Poulsen's interpretation of the rune drum symbols bears the stamp of ambiguity, and it is necessary to look at the separate figures to evaluate his interpretation. All the time he had to stress that when God was prayed to, he helped those who asked for help. He declared again and again that he used his rune drum for good purposes. Originally, all the symbols of the rune drum must have had an explanation in accordance with the old Sami religion, but the situation for Anders Poulsen when questioned by the court was that he had to interpret these symbols within the 'correct' frame, namely that of the Christian faith. Symbols of nature were easy to interpret within a frame he knew from his daily life, the blessings of good weather and the protection of reindeer from wolves. I think here he was close to the original Sami understanding of the symbols. The figures denoting the Trinity were also possible for him to interpret, even if he here had to draw on the knowledge he had from the preaching of the Christian church, not from the traditional Sami religion. It was also possible to explain the rune drum's ability to cause evil by using the image of God as a blessing god and a punishing god. The situation was the same for the figures denoting churches and the people seeking those churches. Probably the interrogators were more interested in the evil effects of the drum than in the good effects. The problems really started when he came to the

⁸⁹¹ Nordkalotten means the areas in the very north of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia bordering to each other.

fifth row and the devils turned up, demanding an explanation. Even if Anders Poulsen stressed that when the ring stopped here, it meant that the person in question was a sinful person and therefore would get his punishment, the authorities saw this as devil worship, even if the symbols denoting hell were described in Biblical terms. He did not use pagan terms, however; words like 'hell' and 'devil' – and 'devil worship' are at least as much Christian concepts. As a whole I think the elements of Anders Poulsen's confession should be differentiated and the interpretations considered as denoting aspects of the old Sami religion mixed with aspects of the Protestant Christian religion. Then it becomes clear that the confession is not a homogeneous one.

In my view, the reason for this is the very special context of his confession. Anders Poulsen was interrogated by officials of the law in a criminal trial. He did not know anything about the outcome. With the cruel witchcraft trials of the 1660s still in memory, he might have had reason to fear the verdict. Taking this into consideration, he was trying his best to convince the officials of the law that he believed in Christianity, that he was following the Christian commandments and that he was attending the services of the church. Therefore he was trying to interpret several of the figures of the rune drum as Christian religious symbols. His situation was difficult, having obviously lived a life in a culture clash between his own Sami background and Norwegian culture. The discourse of Anders Poulsen's confession is not consistent. He hesitates between different 'truths': for instance, who made the rune drum and where he learnt the art of the rune drum. He is unclear about the use of the drum, insisting upon the positive effects of the drumming when God is prayed to, while being evasive about who is the helper when the drum is used for causing bad events. The interpretations of the symbols of the rune drum would probably have been different if the context had not been a trial.

At the same time as the trial of Anders Poulsen took place in Vadsø, the trial of the Sami Lars Nilsson from Piteå Lappmark took place in Arjeplog in Sweden. Lars Nilsson used a rune drum and wooden figures. He was sentenced to the stake, and both the drum and the wooden figures were burned before he himself was burned.⁸⁹² Another case, from the Finnish Sami areas at the beginning of 1671, was the trial of Aikie Aikiesson from Kittka in Kemi Lappmark. He was accused of using the rune drum and singing a special Sami song called 'joik'. The local court sentenced him to death, but on his way to the place of execution he

⁸⁹² Granquist, K., 'Du skal inga andra gudar hava Jämta mig', in Bjørn-Petter Finstad (ed.), *Stat, religion, etnisitet* (Tromsø, 1997), 71–88.

died, allegedly due to the use of sorcery.⁸⁹³ Information about other Sami rune drums which are preserved is given by (among others) Rendick Andersen from Foldalen. In 1723 he gave a description of a rune drum to the 'Sami missionary' Thomas von Westen, who was the missionary in the region north of Trondheim.⁸⁹⁴ Works by (among others) K. Leem in 1767, J.A. Friis in 1871, J. Quigstad in 1903, S. Agrell in 1934, T. I. Itkonen in 1956, E. Manker in 1950 and L. Bäckman in 1975 all give important knowledge about the Sami rune drum.⁸⁹⁵ However, all these descriptions are dated from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and are therefore difficult to compare with the description Anders Poulsen gave.

In the records from the trial of Anders Poulsen, a distance from the story is consistently heard in the legal discourse, a voice displaying scepticism about what Anders Poulsen was narrating. As the above analysis has shown, this distance comes to the fore mainly in remarks about Anders Poulsen's contradictions and his reticence in explaining about the Devil in greater detail. The nature of the questions posed by the interrogators seems to indicate that they were seriously interested in all aspects of Anders Poulsen's knowledge and practice, but that they focused in particular on detailed knowledge about the devils painted on the drum and their powers.

The magistrate was certainly fascinated by Anders Poulsen's narrative and by his playing the drum. The description given of his drum-playing in court is full of amazement. It seems that the legal officials were more interested in hearing Anders Poulsen's voice than in exhibiting their own rhetoric, thus demonstrating a more open, listening and empathic attitude towards the accused person than that which can be traced in the records of the 1660s. Still, since the reliability of Anders Poulsen's confession may be questioned, his narrative does not necessarily give a complete picture of the knowledge and insights of an experienced Sami shaman.

⁸⁹³ The court records are found in Fellman, I., *Handlingar och uppsatsar angående finska lappmarken och lapparne*, vol. I (Helsingfors, 1910), 383–6.

⁸⁹⁴ Jørkov, B., 'Den stærke tromme', *Siden Saxo*, no. 1 (2000), 9–17.

⁸⁹⁵ Leem, K., *Beskrivelse over Finmarkens Lapper* (København, 1767); Friis, J. A., *Lappisk mytologi. Eventyr og Folkesagn* (Christiania, 1871); Quigstad, J., *Kildeskrifter til den lappiske mytologi* (Trondheim, 1903); Agrell, S., *Lapptrommor och runmagi* (Lund, 1934); Itkonen, T. I., *Heidnischer Religion und Späterer Aberglaube bei den Finnischen Lappen* (Helsinki, 1956); Manker, *Die lappische*; Bäckman, L., *Sájva: föreställningar om hjälp- och skyddsväsen i helige fjäll bland samerna* (Stockholm, 1975).

8 Comparison and conclusions

8.1 General

In this chapter the witchcraft trials in Scotland and Finnmark will be compared based on the quantitative and qualitative analyses completed above. The quantitative approach has contributed to uncover tendencies in the source material. The qualitative approach has resulted in detailed studies, focusing on individual trial documents and the discourse during each trial. As mentioned in chapter 1, the main elements for a comparative study are description, interpretation, juxtaposition and comparison. The first two elements are finished, while juxtaposition and comparison remain. These two elements will be treated simultaneously in the sections below. Several recent studies of witchcraft trials have used the comparative perspective, for instance Kallestrup, Voltmer, Rummel and Levack.⁸⁹⁶ In the following I will discuss the main findings of my analyses according to the factors mentioned in my hypothesis.

8.2 Comparison

8.2.1 The demonological element

The analyses in this thesis provide rich evidence for the demonological element being present in primary sources in Scotland as well as in Finnmark. Quantitative analyses of the Scottish material show a substantial numbers of demonic pact confessions. Particularly aspects of the ritual point to inversion of religious motifs, underlining the demonic pact as an individual agreement between the Devil and the witch. By contrast, the notion of collective witchcraft comes to the fore through the confessions of witches' meetings and collective sorcery operations. There are correlations between torture, demonic pact confessions, panics and females. The qualitative analyses show that Barbara Tomasdochter, Katherine Jonesdochter, Jonet Dynneis, Barbara Bowndie, Margaret Duchill, Jonet Morrison, Annabell Stewart and John Stewart all delivered demonological confessions, together displaying a wide spectre of ideas. Witch-pricking was frequently used to spot suspected witches.

For Finnmark the quantitative analyses show many similarities with Scotland, in particular a strong impact of demonological confessions with mention of rituals entering the pact. A difference between the regions is that in the Finnmark confessions we do not find carnal dealings with the Devil. Parallell to Scotland, the quantitative analyses of the sources from Finnmark show correlations between torture, demonic pact confessions, panics and

⁸⁹⁶ Rummel, W. and Voltmer, R., *Hexen*, 113–9; Kallestrup, L. N., *Trolldomsforfølgelser*, 19–20.

females. The qualitative analyses show a wide range of demonological ideas confessed by Karen Edisdatter, Ingrid, Torkild Andersen's wife, Marit Tamisdatter, Bodil Danielsdatter and Maren Olsdatter. Several small girls were involved in the 1662–3 panic, resembling the Blåkulla trials in Sweden.⁸⁹⁷ Interesting is that the learned couple Rhodius imprisoned at Vardøhus Castle in 1662 brought with them specific demonological ideas and managed to circulate these ideas among the other people imprisoned for witchcraft there. These ideas were retold in several of the confessions a few months after the arrival of the couple. The Finnmark material thus offers a very good illustration of the rapid spread of new demonological ideas, as shown in chapter 7.

When comparing Scotland and Finnmark with regard to the demonological element, in specific the correlations between demonic pact confessions, panics and females become distinct. In addition a long row of details related to entering the demonic pact, performing witchcraft and participating at witches' meetings are similar in the two regions; temptation to become the Devil's accomplice, turning from God to the Devil, renouncing of Christian baptism, getting a new name, a new baptism, performing a ritual when entering the pact, the Devil's offering of 'never want', the Devil giving the power of evil-doing to the person entering the pact, collective sorcery operations causing human and animal death or disease, dancing and drinking at witches' meetings, shape-shifting into animals, birds or whales. There is a difference related to the notion of carnal dealings with the Devil, an aspect which was not confessed in Finnmark. This fact points to demonological notions in Finnmark as slightly different from Scotland as well as central Europe.

In both regions the analyses support the close connection between torture, demonic pact confessions and panics, thus explaining how the panics arose. Once a person confessed to a witches meeting, this person also gave the names of other persons participating at the same meeting, which corresponded to a fear among legal and clerical officials of an ungodly, hidden army of the Devil's accomplices existing on earth. In both regions torture was applied and the accused persons were asked leading questions, focused on specific demonological elements. The close-readings of documents from Scotland convincingly show the importance of the demonic pact for the development of trials. The analyses have given evidence that demonic pact confessions often were given in response to leading questions from the interrogators and after various types of torture. How often leading questions were applied the sources cannot uncover. However, there is no doubt that question lists were used during the

⁸⁹⁷ Ankarloo, 'Sweden', 295–6.

witchcraft trials in Europe and that they were designed in a way which brought the accused witch to a crisis, as has been pointed out by Roper.⁸⁹⁸ The technique of asking specific questions was used also during the witch-hunt in Scotland, as the close-readings above have shown. I think this type of interrogation was important in leading the interrogation towards a demonic pact confession. The accused responded to leading questions with long and detailed confessions, a knowledge probably due to assimilation of demonological ideas from the learned elite and the church's preaching to the peasants. In Finnmark the connection between local trials and demonic pact confessions is evident. This connection is more difficult to prove in Scotland, which is probably accidental, due to the range of sources which have survived. Because the correlations between local trials and panics is equally strong in Scotland and in Finnmark, this strengthens the probability that the demonological element being decisive also in Scotland for the panics arising.

8.2.2 The role of the state

The analyses above mainly shed light on how legislation was applied. In the following a juxtaposition of the findings in the two areas will be presented. Afterwards the findings will be compared. In Scotland an intensive witch-hunt was inaugurated in 1590 as a direct result of the initiative of King James VI. This illustrates the active role of the monarch in witch-hunting and the power of the king to put such a hunt on his political agenda. Distribution over time of types of trial, demonstrated in my quantitative analyses of Scottish cases, shows a stronger central control towards the end of the witch-hunt due to actions taken centrally to re-introduce circuit courts.⁸⁹⁹ Use of torture was a field wherein the state through the issuing of warrants from the privy council had power to decide. Steps were taken centrally to reduce application of torture in the 1660s.⁹⁰⁰ The fundamental importance of the Witchcraft Act for the Scottish witch-hunt must be emphasised. The privy council's appointment of commissions of justiciary to try witches in local courts was, as Goodare has maintained, a manifestation of central power.

The qualitative approach to the documents illuminates the role of the state particularly through the analyses of the voice of the law. As shown in the analysis of the central trial of Margaret Wallace, 1622, elaborate defence pleadings could be seen as interest in the topic on the part of the legal professionals. References to secular as well as clerical laws were repeated

⁸⁹⁸ Roper, *Witch Craze*, 29, 47.

⁸⁹⁹ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 137.

⁹⁰⁰ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 137.

several times in the course of the trial. Efforts to keep standards of normal legal procedure might be seen as reflections of state policy towards the crime of witchcraft. The case of Margaret Duchill shows the co-operation between the presbytery and secular legal officials for obtaining a warrant for waking. By leading questions the interrogators managed to turn traditional sorcery in direction of demonology, as seen in the case of Jonet Morrison. Evidence points to legal practice as dominated by demonology.

As with Scotland, the Finnmark witchcraft trials were initially influenced by the king. When travelling north in 1599, Christian IV became aware of the region as one liable to sorcery due to the Samis living there.⁹⁰¹ He wanted to have district governors at Vardøhus Castle with a will to persecute witches and to implement the king's policy with regard to trade and taxation in Bussesundet in Finnmark. An indication that Christian IV paid special attention to Finnmark and the persons there cunning in sorcery can be seen by a letter to the district governor of Vardøhus in 1609, which obliged the district governor to look to that those persons who were found guilty in using sorcery should be sentenced to death without mercy.⁹⁰² The starting point around 1600 seen in the quantitative analyses is simultaneous with Christian IV's interest in this region. The panics coincide to a large extent with the shift in instalment of district governors.⁹⁰³ Further, the role of the state towards witchcraft is clearly seen in legislation throughout the seventeenth century: recesses of 1547 and 1558, statutes of 1593 and 1594, the law of 1604, the decree of 1617, recess of 1643, the Danish Law of 1683.⁹⁰⁴ The demonological notions are clearest seen in the witchcraft decree of 1617, repeated in recess of 1643 and the Danish Law of 1683, defining the 'right' witches as the Devil's allies.⁹⁰⁵ The policy of the kingdom was to persecute these persons.

There were no central trials among the cases in Finnmark, even if the last case, in 1692, was sent from the local court in Finnmark to Copenhagen for further decision. The Court of Appeal might be seen as an intermediate link to the central authorities. Direct relations between central legal authorities and Finnmark with regard to sentences in witchcraft trials were non-existent. The quantitative analyses of the Finnmark sources demonstrate clearly that the trials conducted at the Court of Appeal followed another pattern as for sentences than those conducted by the local courts as for rate of execution and acquittals. The Court Appeal Judge was much more restrictive as for death sentences than the legal officials at Vardøhus.

⁹⁰¹ Grubbe, 'Kongens'; Hagen, R., 'The King, the Cat, and the Chaplain' in Klaniczay, G. and Pócs, É., *Communicating with the Spirits* (Budapest, 2005), 246-63.

⁹⁰² Niemi, *Vadsøs historie*, 219; Willumsen, *Trollkvinne* (1994), 57.

⁹⁰³ Lindhartsen, 'Lensherrer', 61.

⁹⁰⁴ Sunde, *Speculum legale*, 183-96; Jørgensen, *Dansk strafferet*, 390-411; Andersen, 'Danske Lov'.

⁹⁰⁵ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne* (1994), 57; Alm, *Statens rolle*, 114, 117; Kallestrup, *Trolldomsfølgelser*, 73.

The qualitative analyses show that the legislation of the kingdom was adhered to during the trials through judicial practice: the compurgatory oath, and torture after sentence, which was legal in Denmark-Norway, as mentioned earlier. In-depth studies demonstrate a link between legislation and demonological notions.

Comparing the Scottish and the Finnmark material with regard to the role of the state one finds that during the initial phase of the witch-hunt in both regions the monarchs were active. In addition both regions demonstrate state control and influence on legislation and judicial practice. Similarities are laws passed directed towards the persecution of witchcraft and statutes making torture possible in certain contexts. The practice of circuit courts with representatives from central authorities is also a similarity. In both regions a stronger intervention from central authorities resulted in a decrease of executions towards the end of the witch-hunt, a point mentioned by Knutsen in his discussion of the end of witch-hunts in Scandinavia.⁹⁰⁶ Panics in Scotland as in Finnmark seem to be related to political unrest and regional disasters. The most important difference between Scotland and Finnmark had to do with the appointment of commissions of justiciary in Scotland, a point I will discuss further related to the local courts. In Finnmark a witchcraft trial could be started without any permission from central authorities. This fact indicates a stronger central grasp of the formal initiating of a witchcraft trial in Scotland than in Finnmark. Another difference to be noted is the use of witch-pricking in Scotland and the water ordeal in Finnmark. In total the state played an important role during the witchcraft trials, mainly because of legislation and judicial practice in both kingdoms. However, as will be seen below, my argument will be that the local courts played an even more important role.

8.2.3 The local courts

The quantitative analyses in both regions show an astonishing similar pattern with regard to the connection between local courts, females, torture, demonic pact confessions, denunciations, panics and execution rate. This solid connection is my main argument for claiming that the attention should be directed towards the local courts to find explanations for the witch-hunt in Scotland and Finnmark. It has been demonstrated beyond doubt in the analyses that the demonological element has permeated the witchcraft trials in ways that turned out to have tremendous effect in the local courts. The pressure to hold these trials came in both regions from the local elites; in Scotland from the kirk and the courts in alliance; in Finnmark mostly from legal officials at the local courts. In order for the Scottish local courts

⁹⁰⁶ Knutsen, G., 'The End of Witch Hunts', 159.

to have commissions of justiciary appointed, a dossier of documents from preliminary examination was required to convince the privy council. Thus the initiative to start a local trial was taken well in advance of the trial. The urge to continue and multiply a trial also was found in the local courts and was successful due to eager witch-hunters, for example the district governors in Finnmark, use of torture and demonological confessions. The total analyses of frequency of cases, panics versus non-panic periods, the occurrence of torture, the number of accused implicated by others, types of trials and executions all point towards the local courts as the main arena for the witch-hunt in both regions. The majority of cases were held before the local courts. The panics mostly took place in local courts. The majority of accused persons implicated by others were found in local courts. Application of torture was found in local courts. Execution sentences were mostly passed in local courts. In sum this weight of evidence shows that local courts during the seventeenth century witchcraft trials in Scotland and Finnmark were particularly dedicated to their task of witch-hunting.

The qualitative analyses in both regions support the findings from the quantitative analyses that there was a deadly connection between torture, demonic pact confession, panics and sentence of execution. The analyses of the voice of the accused give a revealing image of what happened in the courtroom. Use of torture and the multiplying effect of demonology contributed to the significant pattern demonstrated in chapters 2 and 3. For the question how widespread torture was, opinions differ among scholars, as has been discussed above. In both countries there is evidence that persons died during torture, before sentence. It seems clear when looking at local courts and the Court of Appeal in Finnmark that the local courts were less prohibitive as for use of torture than the Court of Appeal. In Scotland, when mixed central-local trials took over, torture is no longer documented during witchcraft cases. Use of leading questions to obtain confessions is frequently documented. The interrogations demonstrate the purposefulness of the witch-hunters in local courts with regard to extracting demonic pact confessions including witches' meetings. Interrogation became increasingly efficient as decades went by.

In both regions the demonic pact was formed as a narrative of temptation. The Devil's offer is found in both regions. Renouncing the Christian baptism and giving oneself to the Devil, receiving a new name, is found in both regions. The ritual when entering the pact is given considerable attention in both regions. Specific places for witches meetings are mentioned in both regions. Details about activities at witches' meetings are confessed in both regions. As for differences, in Finnmark there was more weight on the mentor teaching witchcraft and the way one person acquired knowledge about witchcraft than in Scotland.

Likewise the pact in Finnmark often included getting a demon as one's companion, called 'Apostel'. Carnal dealing with the Devil was confessed in Scotland, but not in Finnmark. An explanation of the regional differences could be the difference between Finnmark and Scotland in distance from central Europe. Scotland was more European with regard to demonological notions than Finnmark.

Metamorphosis is documented in both Scotland and Finnmark, either in connection with witches' meeting or with sorcery operations. In Finnmark shape-shifting into whales, birds, cats and dogs is common. Shape-shifting to birds is not found in the Scottish sources I have studied. Levack mentions the difference between Scotland and the Continent with regard to the notion that witches could fly, as in Scotland 'the belief in the Sabbath could and did exist independently of the belief in night flight'.⁹⁰⁷ In my view these variations in the European material might be due to adjustment of witchcraft narratives to local conditions. In both Scotland and Finnmark metamorphosis was performed to adapt to natural surroundings. In Scotland the witches did not go far away for witches' meetings, often the meetings were held at a field nearby. In Finnmark they had to go to places of assembly located so far away that flying was the only possibility. Even if there were wide variations on the Continent, some of the notions were special, with regard to other Sabbath features. For instance the Spaniards accused of witchcraft confessed to witches' Sabbaths including sexual orgies and baby-eating, confessions with more macabre content than those found in the Finnmark or in the Scottish material.⁹⁰⁸ Throughout the females were in majority with highest number of demonic confessions. This gender bias probably had to do with the fact that women in this period of history were especially exposed to persecution due to the demonological ideas overflowing Europe.

The several parallel results from the quantitative and qualitative analyses performed gives evidence that the mechanism of demonology in co-operation with use of torture in local courts had a tremendous effect on the witchcraft trials in Scotland as well as Finnmark. There is evidence in the material for particular cruelty during panics to obtain denunciations and confessions. The use of torture seems to have been crucial in this connection. This finding supports the argument that the combination of pressure from local courts to initiate demonological trials and use of torture to press forth confessions and denunciations during interrogation are very important explanatory factors for the witchcraft persecution in the two regions in question. It should also be pointed out that we find similarities due to mixed

⁹⁰⁷ Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 46.

⁹⁰⁸ Baroja, J. C., *The World of the Witches* (Chicago, 1961), 39–40.

systems of criminal procedures in both areas, with use of jury and at the same time application of methods for seeking circumstantial evidence. A judicial practice combining accusatorial as well as inquisitorial features might have contributed to the severity of the witch-hunt in Scotland as well as Finnmark.

8.2.4 The role of the church

One of the marked differences between the witch-hunt in Scotland and Finnmark is the role played by the church. While the kirk in Scotland in most cases was active during the first steps of a witchcraft trial, in Norway the whole trial took place in the courtroom. In both regions close-readings of sources have shown that ministers had two functions in witchcraft trials: Participation during interrogation and preparation of accused persons before their death. In Scotland the ministers were active with regard to preparing a dossier of documents to be sent to the privy council in order to have a commission for trying a witch appointed. The close-reading of the Bute document has thrown light on the active roles of the kirk session, the minister and some of its members. Part of the questioning of Jonet Morrison has to do with her activity as a trusted cunning person. A connection between Jonet Morrison's healing activity and the suspicion of witchcraft was established by the kirk session when they used her healing activity as a threat that she would be charged as a 'witch'. As soon as the word 'witch' is used, a link was made to demonology. The scribe, probably the minister, did not question this connection, nor did he question the necessity of having the accusations against Jonet Morrison treated further on in the judicial system. This attitude on the part of the scribe shows how deep the fear of witchcraft was during this period.

The minister's function in preparing the accused persons before their deaths seems to be similar in Scotland and Finnmark. However, there was not the same eagerness from the church in Norway as from the kirk in Scotland as for trying witches. I think the human factor is decisive, as the government officials in Finnmark probably were more powerful than the ministers. No doubt ideas of the leading Danish theologians, Niels Hemmingsen, Jesper Brochmand and Poul Andersen Medelby, were known in Finnmark at the time, representing an understanding of witchcraft where the Devil is in the centre. In spite of this the church was more passive in initiating witch-hunt in Finnmark.⁹⁰⁹ The post Reformation Bibles used in the kingdom of Denmark-Norway, Hans P. Resen's edition of 1607 and Christian IV's Bible of

⁹⁰⁹ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne*, (1994), 60–1; Schulte, *Hexenverfolgung*.

1633, do not show any significant changes from the older bibles in the formulations of Leviticus, chapter 20:27 or Deuteronomy, chapter 18:10-11.⁹¹⁰

8.2.5 Neighbourhood disputes

Robert Briggs' witchcraft study from Lorraine, in which the nature of witchcraft persecution is interpreted as a social and political phenomenon, points to the 'multiple local variations resulted from a complex and unpredictable interaction between popular and elite ideas about witchcraft'.⁹¹¹ He underlines the continual existence of witchcraft in the local communities:

Witchcraft was about envy, ill-will and the power to harm others, exercised in small face-to-face communities which, although they could often contain such feelings, found it almost impossible to disperse them. Those involved relied heavily on the cunning folk and their counter-magic, alongside a range of social and political pressures, to deal with suspect neighbours.⁹¹²

I agree that interaction between popular and elite ideas in the local communities is an important point to discuss. Still, the explanation of the historical witchcraft trials must be based on a concept of witchcraft which was not a continual one. The analyses in this thesis have pointed to the demonological notions, which were limited in time, as essential when it comes to explain the beginning and the sudden increase of witchcraft trials.

For Scotland there is evidence in the quantitative studies that neighbourhood disputes played a role in witchcraft accusations. Women were involved in neighbourhood disputes to a higher extent than men. Neighbourhood disputes were mentioned as motives for witchcraft accusations in all types of trials. There is no indication that neighbourhood disputes increased during panic periods. The qualitative analyses show in detail how these conflicts came into being and strongly support an interpretation of the sources in which the beginning of a witchcraft trial often was accidental; the consequence of some angry words related to daily life might have a disastrous result – thus contextualising a female network. The eagerness to testify about these conflicts shows that the witnesses considered these motives relevant for the case. The testimonies bear the stamp of retrospectively making a link between word uttered and a tragic event happening afterwards.

The Finnmark material demonstrates similar findings. The quantitative analyses give evidence that quarrels with neighbours were part of a broad range of motives mentioned by witnesses. However, it is important to bear in mind that the majority of cases in Finnmark were denunciation cases, not accusation cases, thus paying little attention to motives. Still, the

⁹¹⁰ *Biblia* (København, 1606), edn. by Hans P. Resen; *Biblia* (København, 1633).

⁹¹¹ Briggs, *Witches*, 345.

⁹¹² Briggs, *Witches*, 344.

qualitative analyses show that hasty quarrels often came up due to disagreements in household work or deeper tensions founded in socio-economic relations. I would like to discuss some socio-economic factors related to Finnmark in the period, in order to find some clues that could substantiate an explanation of the witch-hunt on socio-economic grounds. Niemi and Balsvik have emphasised the period 1500–1650 in Finnmark as one from expansion to stagnation.⁹¹³ The seventeenth century was characterised by bad periods in fisheries and several severe shipwrecks. Bergen merchants living in Vadsø played an important role in initiating witchcraft trials during the 1650s and 1660s, due to economic losses related to shipwrecks allegedly caused by witches and fear that the merchants would lose control over the local fishermen.⁹¹⁴ Alleged witches were seen as scapegoats for the disasters that struck local communities.⁹¹⁵ Common people frequently brought complaints before the local courts related to bad fisheries and poverty, so that they could not manage to pay their taxes.⁹¹⁶ At the end of the seventeenth century the Bergen merchants evaluated the Finnmark trade as unprofitable.⁹¹⁷

To what extent could profound changes in the social texture have contributed to the witchcraft trials? This question forms the basis of a theory according to which ‘social strain’ was the cause of the persecutions. The theory was initially introduced by Marwick in 1965⁹¹⁸ about conditions in England, and later followed up by Thomas and Macfarlane⁹¹⁹ in studies of English trials. The essence of the theory is that accusations of witchcraft are linked with profound changes in the social texture, applied to English conditions from 1550 to 1650. As argued by Lamer, these conditions did not explain the start of the witch-hunt or the end of the witch-hunt and did not necessarily have relevance for other countries than England.⁹²⁰ Næss supports the social strain theory and points to increase in social control for all of Norway.⁹²¹ A similar development in Scotland has been pointed out by Goodare.⁹²² Willumsen shows that in mid seventeenth century Finnmark complaints related to failed fisheries were repeatedly voiced before the courts – people were unable to pay their taxes. But the Finnmark sources do not substantiate the supposition that

⁹¹³ Balsvik, *Vardø*, 20–33; Niemi, *Vadsøs historie*, 69–230.

⁹¹⁴ Niemi, *Vadsøs historie*, 69, 108, 221–5.

⁹¹⁵ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne* (1984), 87; Niemi, *Vadsøs historie*, 221–5.

⁹¹⁶ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne*, (1984), 86.

⁹¹⁷ Niemi, *Vadsøs historie*, 289.

⁹¹⁸ Marwick, M. G., *Sorcery in its Social Setting* (Manchester, 1965).

⁹¹⁹ Macfarlane, A., *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England* (London, 1970) 200–6; Thomas, K., *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London, 1971), 561–7.

⁹²⁰ Lamer, C., ‘Crimen Exceptum. The crime of Witchcraft in Europe’, in *Witchcraft and Religion* (Oxford, 1984), 48–53.

⁹²¹ Næss, *Trolldomsprosessene i Norge*, 353–5, 358.

⁹²² Goodare, J., *The Government of Scotland* (Oxford, 2004), chs. 9 and 11.

responsibility for the have-nots has been shifted during the period at hand. The fact that the district lord occasionally had to interfere by providing food simply because he alone was in a position to do so did not mean that the principle of neighbourliness had been abandoned. There is no evidence in the sources from Finnmark of refused charity related to begging. Economic problems might have caused a strain in the population, but the sources do not contain evidence that this could be the only explanation to the witch-hunt in Finnmark.⁹²³

8.2.6 The spoken word

In an oral society the spoken word was absolutely necessary for ideas about the Devil to spread and develop. When the confessions were so rich and flourishing in language as has been demonstrated from both Scotland and Finnmark, I take that the knowledge of these ideas were known by the accused before they entered the courtroom. Exposed to torture it was a question of *knowledge* in response to leading questions. This is not the same as profound belief. Therefore it is necessary to demonstrate that there had to be a link between old folkloric belief and confessions of demonic pact in order to argue that peasants brought folkloric ideas with them into the courtroom. It has been argued that in Scotland's case the belief in the world of the fairies could explain that the accused persons confessed to the demonic pact. In my view the narratives about demonic pact were not dependant upon notions of a second world. They could as well be related to other known narratives, mentioned for example by Roper, who stresses that the 'motifs of witchcraft were indeed familiar'.⁹²⁴ Briggs is emphasising the narrative aspect: 'The confessions were structured as narratives, around the banal succession of temptation, diabolical pact, sabbat and harm done to neighbours'.⁹²⁵ Studies have been made of the spread of narratives within an oral society, as mentioned above. In the Scottish sources there is a good example of stories about witches' meetings being spread among the peasants in the case of Barbara Bowndie; the story of the dancers from Mune and information about how many years it was since the story started to be told among the peasants in the community. The Finnmark analyses show the speed of specific demonological ideas within a circle of imprisoned persons in the early 1660s. The qualitative analyses have further shown that the confessions both in Scotland and in Finnmark most often have a strong oral accent; structured by easily remembered syntactic expressions and

⁹²³ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne*, (1994), 66.

⁹²⁴ Roper, *Witch Craze*, 121.

⁹²⁵ Briggs, *Witches*, 339.

characterised by easily remembered images. The linguistic richness and all the details in the confessions are arguments that the accused persons knew these notions well before they were imprisoned. Not in any case is seen a short 'Yes' or 'No' in response to the interrogator's questions. Instead a long and detailed confession is given. In both regions words in vernacular are recorded, just as the scribe heard the word pronounced orally. The total of analyses support an oral transmission of demonological narratives, in turn reproduced in confessions.

8.2.7 Folk belief

The phrase 'folk belief' in the seventeenth century covers a range of different types of belief, from ghosts to fairies, as demonstrated by Goodare.⁹²⁶ The analyses in this thesis have demonstrated details and nuances of folk belief through the analyses of the voice of the accused and the voices of the witnesses, illustrating that the belief in working magic was profound among the peasants. Sorcery as a 'material' crime is demonstrated in the use of physical objects.⁹²⁷ Woven into these notions are demonological ideas as exemplified above.

I have focused on two types of folk belief: healing and fairy belief. The quantitative analyses for Scotland show that among persons accused of witchcraft there were persons mentioned as healing humans and animals, but not registered in high numbers. The activity of healing did not follow panics. In the Finnmark sources healing is mentioned in eleven cases, spread throughout the period, and not in specific linked to panic years. Comparing Scotland and Finnmark it seems clear that healing was an activity performed in both regions and that being a recognised healer could influence the risk of becoming a witchcraft suspect.

Fairy belief is in the Scottish material scattered throughout the whole period of the witch-hunt. In the same way as with healing the numbers of registrations are modest. There was no upheaval during panic years, so the belief in fairies seems to have existed like an undercurrent while witchcraft trials took place. Men and women in equal proportions confessed to fairy belief. In Finnmark fairies were mentioned in only one case, 1689.⁹²⁸ The belief in fairies seems to have been a characteristic feature in Scottish folk belief. The question is whether belief in fairies could contribute to explain the Scottish witch-hunt, as the notion of another world is underlying both concepts. In my view the notion of the world of the fairies and the world of witches are not compatible, neither in contents nor in duration of time. The ideas of the Devil, the demonic pact and the witches' meeting are not present in Scottish

⁹²⁶ Goodare, 'Scottish Witchcraft in its European Context', 26–50.

⁹²⁷ Kallestrup, *Trolddomsfølgelser*, 291.

⁹²⁸ Birgitte Eriksdatter, SATØ, SF 23, fos. 3v–5v.

fairy belief. Therefore I disagree with Henderson, Cowan and Goodare with regard to the importance of fairy belief for Scottish witchcraft trials.⁹²⁹ The world of witches, as seen illustrated through the witchcraft documents, is a notion linked to the early modern concept of demonology and contains elements related to demonic pact and witches meetings – performances directed by the Evil One. The world of the fairies is related to traditional folklore, a notion lasting before, during and after the witchcraft trials. This world contains supernatural creatures with supernatural powers, but the stage is not directed by an evil force. Therefore a parallel between these worlds cannot be drawn. Belief in fairies is insufficient as explanation for the historical witch-hunt. When these types of folk belief became of interest for the legal officials during the witchcraft trials, it was because the belief was demonised. Folk belief had to be attached to demonology to be regarded a dangerous crime.

8.2.8 The superstitious north

The specific ethnic conditions in Scotland and in Finnmark, where two groups with different language and culture lived side by side, seem to have influenced the witchcraft trials in Finnmark to a larger extent than that in Scotland. In Finnmark the men accused of witchcraft were mainly Sami. In Scotland the Highlanders were not in focus during the witch-hunt. A possible explanation is Sami men's reputation of sorcery throughout contemporary Europe. Several wide-spread European books portrayed Sami men as cunning in sorcery. Books by Olaus Magnus, Peder Clausssøn Friis and Johan Schefferus, published in 1555, 1632 and 1673 respectively, all portray Sami men – not Sami women – as exotic and pagan for a contemporary reading European audience. All authors emphasise the superstition of the Samis and their abilities to perform sorcery. Seventeenth century source material related to Sami religious practise written down by male missionaries working among the Samis, support this picture. H. Rydving points to the fact that in the source material for indigenous Sami religion there is an imbalance between how men's and women's religious customs and ideas are described. Even if Sami men's religion and Sami women's religion contrasted with and complemented each other, the sacrificial cult presented in the sources is above all 'an aspect of the Saami men's religion'.⁹³⁰ The one-sidedness of the descriptions 'is due to the fact that it was not possible for the male missionaries to get acquainted with the religious world of the

⁹²⁹ Henderson and Cowan, *Scottish Fairy Belief*; Goodare, 'Scottish Witchcraft in its European Context', 33.

⁹³⁰ H. Rydving, 'Saami responses to Christianity. Resistance and change', in J. K. Olupona, *Beyond primitivism. Indigenous religious traditions and modernity* (New York, 2004), 103.

women'.⁹³¹ Several other studies focusing on Sami encounters with the Swedish state; religious change and the image of the Devil in the north, support this view.⁹³² There is no doubt that the gaze from outside saw the Sami men as main practitioners of magic. I think this is the explanation for Sami men being focused during the witch-hunt, whereas Sami women were not. In fact, as the analyses above have shown, Norwegian women clearly were in majority as for witchcraft reputation, not Sami women.

Related to the Sami practice of sorcery, two different concepts of sorcery were at stake in seventeenth century Finnmark. While Sami sorcery was an individual art, demonological witchcraft was mainly a collective phenomenon. In the sources from Finnmark there is a clear split in the material between the accusations and confessions of the Samis and the accusations and confessions of the Norwegians. The Sami sorcery is part of an old tradition, and performed on an individual basis. This type of sorcery was not learned from the Devil. Therefore the Sami persons were represented in isolated cases. Contrary to this was the demonological concept of ideas, where witchcraft was obtained through the pact with the Devil and where witches' meetings and collective sorcery operations were important aspects.

Peoples of the north were known to be cunning in magic, for instance mentioned in King James VI's *Demonology*. In other arenas, along with Sami and Latvian soldiers the Highlanders were portrayed as users of magic during Gustava Adolfus' seven years' war, an illustration emphasising these persons as coming out of the wild.⁹³³ Several of the Scottish witchcraft trials comprised Highlanders, for instance the Bute trials of the early 1660s, the Inverness trials of the 1660s and the Cromerty trials. A Highland woman, Margaret McClain, is mentioned as mentor.⁹³⁴ Lizanne Henderson and Edward J. Cowan say:

While trials did take place in Gaelic-speaking regions, witch panics were fewer though the precise reasons for this are unknown. It is possible that Gaelic society enjoyed a higher level of toleration of the occult and so managed to retain a certain level of acceptance or, perhaps large parishes and the fewer number of kirk sessions in the Highlands decreased the chances of major outbreaks of panic.⁹³⁵

If we compare the Samis in Norway with the Highlanders, I think the explanation could be another. Most of the Sami persons were not prosecuted in panics, but instead in single cases

⁹³¹ Rydving, 'Saami responses', 103.

⁹³² Rydving, *The End of Drum-time*; Davidson, P., *The Idea of North* (London, 2005); Fur, G., *Colonialism in the Margins: Cultural Encounters in New Sweden and Lapland* (Leiden, 2006).

⁹³³ Williamson, A. H., 'Scots, Indian and Empire: The Scottish politics of civilization, 1519–1609', *Past and Present*, no. 150 (1996), 55.

⁹³⁴ RPC, 3rd series, xiii (1686–89), 250, 261. 'You answeres a Highland woman learned you called Margaret McClain.' She has asked the man accused to renounce his baptism. Another panel: 'Ane Highland woman learned her, did she renounce her baptism; the pannal answered, she did quhat she bade her'.

⁹³⁵ Henderson and Cowan, *Scottish Fairy Belief*, 121.

for traditional sorcery.⁹³⁶ This might be true for the Highlanders as well. This emphasis on individual sorcery is in my view the reason why the Samis were less involved in demonic trials than the Norwegians.

The understanding of special ethnic groups being liable to sorcery might have had an impact on the start and end of witchcraft persecution in Finnmark. The focus on Sami sorcery was constant, although modest, throughout the witch-hunt. In contrary the Highlanders' were not in specific focused during the Scottish witch-hunt. One explanation could be that the Sami practice of sorcery was better known in contemporary Europe than the Highlanders' practice and thus influenced the treatment of the ethnic group related to witchcraft trials. A second explanation could be that Sami sorcery more easily could be attached to the notions of demonological witchcraft than could the Highlanders' practice of sorcery. A third explanation could be that the traditional religion of the Samis was regarded as a greater obstacle to the implementation of post Reformation religion than the case was for the Highlanders, consequently bringing the witchcraft persecution of this ethnic group onto the agenda of the state.

8.2.9 The personal factor

The personal factor has been pointed out by scholars such as Golden and Voltmer as crucial for initiating and putting a stamp on a witchcraft panic.⁹³⁷ In Scotland and Finnmark the personal factor was distinctive with regard to influence on the early stages of the witch-hunt. The origin of demonological ideas in Scotland is difficult to trace. James VI's visit to Denmark has been discussed among scholars, but so far no consensus exists. Other possibilities may be that demonological works were known in Scotland before the king's trip or that Chancellor Maitland, who went with King James on the voyage to Denmark, might have brought back demonological ideas, as mentioned above. What is clear is that King James came back to Scotland in April 1590 and c. 1591 wrote an early draft of his manuscript for *Demonology*. The origin of demonological ideas in Finnmark is easier to trace, as they occur in the court records shortly after John Cunningham was installed as district governor in 1619. There is a high probability that these notions were brought to Finnmark by him and set in circulation locally from the top downwards.

The personal factor can be seen in relation to personal threat as well as official practice. The witch-hunt really took off when powerful people felt they were personally

⁹³⁶ Willumsen, *Trollkvinne* (1994), 66.

⁹³⁷ Golden, 'Satan in Europe'; Voltmer, 'Hexenjagd', 241–42.

threatened by witches. We see this in the case of James VI and the North Berwick witches; in the case of an alleged plot against the district governor and his wife in Finnmark in 1663; in the case of a Bergen merchant in Vadsø who felt his ships as well as his family members to be under threat.⁹³⁸ The closer the results of witches' activity came to the private sphere, the more the person in question panicked. The personal factor related to individuals in office is exemplified in the case of Jonet Morrison. The witch-hunters in Bute seem to be closely connected with the leading members of the local church and the persons possessing authority within the bureaucracy of the burgh. In Finnmark, there is evidence that the district governors and the bailiffs personally influenced the witch-hunt. There was a need for governors to manifest their power after they entered office, which may be reflected in the witchcraft panics which followed the installation of each new district governor. The same is seen related to the Scottish panics in 1649 and 1661, which both took place after new regimes came to power. Thus state policy and personal ambition went hand in hand. It will hardly be possible to tell exactly what kind of ideas each of the government officials installed in Finnmark was carrying to the north, but judged from the result of their practise, they must have known and implemented demonological ideas there.

8.2.10 The Scottish connection

I will argue that there is a direct connection between the witchcraft trials in Finnmark and in Scotland. My argument is based on the installation of John Cunningham as district governor in Finnmark in 1619 as well as linguistic evidence in the sources.

John Cunningham of Barns in Fife is a key person when it comes to understand the initial phase of demonological trials in Finnmark. He certainly knew about demonology before he entered the service of the Danish king in 1604. Barns was located near the village of Crail, from where he could see over to North Berwick, where the serious witchcraft trials of 1590 had taken place. Born in c. 1575 he must have heard about these witchcraft persecutions. There was witch-hunting in towns near Crail in 1597.⁹³⁹ Cunningham was acquainted with the Scottish king James VI, the only European monarch to publish a demonological treatise. Cunningham was just in time to influence judicial officials, jury members and peasants before the outbreak of the first Finnmark panic. He was active in questioning during trials and contributed to bring demonological notions into the interrogation. There is no evidence that

⁹³⁸ Levack, *Witch-hunting*, 37; Willumsen, *Trollkvinne* (1994), 42.

⁹³⁹ Goodare, 'Scottish witchcraft panic', 57.

demonological ideas were known before 1620 in Finnmark. When looking at the whole period of witchcraft persecution in Finnmark, it is clear that there was a change towards demonology in the early 1620s, corresponding with Cunningham's arrival.

The most important finding in my study supporting the connection between Scotland and Finnmark is an extraordinary linguistic finding. In studies of Finnmark witchcraft trials the place-name of Balduolden, appearing in the sources in the 1620s, has so far not been possible to explain. Balduolden is a descriptive noun, the first part denoting a ball,⁹⁴⁰ the latter part denoting a piece of grassland or turf.⁹⁴¹ During the Finnmark panic of 1620–21 several accused women from Vardø confessed to have attended witches meetings' at Balduolden outside Vardø.⁹⁴² In addition accused women from the village of Omgang confessed to have attended witches' meetings at Wolden outside Omgang,⁹⁴³ a word identical with the latter part of Balduolden. Of particular interest is it that the first woman accused in the 1620–21 panic, Karen Edisdatter, came from Omgang. As the trial of Karen Edisdatter in 1620 is the very first to document demonological notions related to witches' meetings in Finnmark, it is likely that the idea of witches gathering at a piece of grassland near the village was known among the peasants living in the village of Omgang from 1620 onwards. It should be born in mind that the Finnmark panic of 1620–21 started a short time after John Cunningham was installed as district governor at Vardøhus castle in Finnmark. When Lisbet Nilsdatter from Omgang was brought before the court in 1621, she was acquainted with this notion and included it in her confession. As has been mentioned in the close-readings above, we find exactly the same image of witches' meeting at a ball-ley in the Scottish material, thus connecting the use of the word in Scotland and Finnmark. As shown in the analyses of Barbara Bowndie's case, she confessed that the witches used to meet at the Ball Ley. This is a word denoting the same as Balduolden. The word Ball-grene is mentioned in Pitcairn's *Criminal trials* in records from 1611.⁹⁴⁴ In the case of Margaret Duchill she confessed that Elisabeth Blak came to her and took her to the 'crofts of Alloway', where the Devil came to them. A 'croft' is a piece of enclosed land, or small field, used for tillage or pasture.⁹⁴⁵ The word croft has the meaning

⁹⁴⁰ The word is ambiguous; ball can denote a ball for games and a feast.

⁹⁴¹ Ball-ley, Ball-grene and Balgrene are variants of the same word. The word means a green on which ball-games are played. Ley, also le, lie, leye, lee, lye means a tract of open grass-land, meadow or pasture, found chiefly as second element in Scottiash place-names from an early date. The word also means land which has been left untilled for some time and allowed to return to grass used as pasture, ref. DOST, 12 vols., i, 176.

⁹⁴² For instance the trial of Kirsten Sørensdatter, SATØ, SF 6, fo. 28v.

⁹⁴³ The trial of Lisbet Nilsdatter, 1621, SATØ, SF 6, fo. 35r.

⁹⁴⁴ Pitcairn, *Criminal Trials*, iii, part I, 214, 'the Reidhous was vpone the Ball-grene, playing with him'.

⁹⁴⁵ BL, Egerton MS 2879, fo. 8v.

small, enclosed field.⁹⁴⁶ Witches' meeting at the 'cuning yaird' is also mentioned in connection with Duchill.⁹⁴⁷ The word means a rabbit-warren, also attributed with to hillis land.⁹⁴⁸ When these words with identical meaning and used in the same semantic context is documented in witchcraft cases in the two areas on either side of the North Sea, this cannot be accidental. An unequivocal connection is detected on linguistic grounds. Another language image found in both areas is the one of a woman being 'officer' for the other witches in a group, as seen in the Paisley case of Bessie Weir above. The same image, a woman being 'officer' or 'ringleader' for a group, is found in several confessions from Dunfermline in Fife, the area where John Cunningham came from.⁹⁴⁹ In Finnmark we find the same image in the case of Kirsten Sørensdatter in 1621, where she is said to be the 'admiral' for the rest of a group.⁹⁵⁰ The linguistic findings in the material cannot be overlooked. They point to very interesting similarities between the two regions in question. In my view it is likely that these notions were brought to Finnmark by John Cunningham as part of the demonological element being introduced by him.

8.3 Conclusion

In close-readings of court records reflections on language's own ability to convey meaning comes to the fore, bridging the gap of four hundred years between the seventeenth and the twenty-first century. Firstly, there is the process of standardisation of language; steadily more phraseology in the court records seen in both regions. It is as if the scribe has been bored after decades of repeating the same type of interrogation and confession. Secondly, there is the dissolving process of language seen in the confession of long tortured persons; expressions falling apart, syntax as well as contents blurred and at times unintelligible. Thirdly, there are implicit formulations carrying the message of torture in a long row of cases. Fourthly, there is the establishing of a meta-level of language through the voice of the scribe. His comments reveal much about the climate in the courtroom and the contemporary attitude to witchcraft. These features show that judicial practise in witchcraft trials is displayed through in-depth

⁹⁴⁶ DOST, 12 vols., i, 747, e. g. 1600, 'All and haill the fauld and croft of land', ref. *Misc.* Spalding, c iv, 268.

⁹⁴⁷ BL, Egerton MS 2879, fo. 6r.

⁹⁴⁸ DOST, 12 vols., i, 775. Cuning, cunning means a rabbit. The word is frequently documented during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, e.g. 1625, 'The landis of Cassakes (...) with the salmond fishings and cunyngars of the samyne lands', Reg. Great S., 332/2; 1638, 'There are rich cuningars almost in every isle', Aboyne Rec., 281, 1693.

⁹⁴⁹ Macdonald, 'Devil in Fife witchcraft cases' in Goodare, *Scottish witch-hunt in context*, 41. The cases of Margaret Blackburn, Margaret Martin, Katherine Grieve and Isobel Leitch, 1649–50.

⁹⁵⁰ SATØ, SF 6, fo. 27r. A similar image is found in Sweden, cf. Svennungsson, L. M., *Rannsakingarna om trolldom i Bohuslän 1669–1672* (Uddevalla, 1970), 59, 89.

studies of language structures to a degree considerably beyond what immediately seems to be the case from superficial reading.

This thesis has compared witchcraft trials in two European regions. My hypothesis, stating that a co-existence of several factors working in the same direction, influencing different levels of society, prepared the ground for the witch-hunt to start and to continue, has been supported. The two analytical approaches to the material, quantitative and qualitative, have in completion demonstrated the fruitfulness of a broad interpretative effort as well as the complexity of the historical witch-hunt as a phenomenon. A set of factors was suggested in my hypothesis as tentatively influential on the actual witchcraft trials. My analyses have confirmed several of these; the demonological element, the laws, the church, pressures from local courts, torture, personal influence from legal and clerical officials, assimilation of demonological ideas in an oral society, ideas about the superstitious north, connection between the regions based on linguistic coalescence in demonological imagery, as we see in the images of the ball-ley and a woman being officer for the others. The remaining factors mentioned in my hypothesis, neighbourhood disputes and folk belief, are more difficult to relate to the period of witch-hunt as explanatory reasons. The comparison has shown that witches in Scotland and Finnmark share many features with each other. Still they have their cultural distinctiveness intact.

The question of gender runs through my study. Most analyses of the material show that women are treated differently from men. The study has shown the vulnerability of women and the impossibility of being treated in a neutral way once she was imprisoned. Records report women's everyday lives: loyalty towards other women, disputes with other women, anxiety for lack of food, loss of animals and sickness. But ordinary women living their ordinary lives – for most of the accused females were in that category – would never had to fear being burned unless there was a formal system to catch denunciations and push for trials. This insecurity had an effect on them all, young and old, married and unmarried. Therefore the characterisation of women accused of witchcraft as victims is appropriate and the explanation for the gender bias is to be found in the ideological sphere.

This thesis has come to its end. Methodologically it has explored tendencies in the entire source material as well as highlighted discourse and language in individual witchcraft documents. Several explanatory reasons for the witch-hunts in the two regions have been illuminated, in total supporting my hypothesis that the historical witchcraft trials were very complex phenomena. A comparative study of this kind is a contribution to witchcraft research in Scotland and in Norway. However, the study will hopefully also contribute to the field of

witchcraft research in general, offering analyses and findings from two European regions with severe witchcraft persecution.

Appendices

A Appendix Statistics: Scotland

Year	Frequency	Year	Frequency	Year	Frequency	Year	Frequency
1560	1	1605	3	1650	213	1695	2
1561	1	1606	2	1651	5	1696	2
1562	2	1607	3	1652	5	1697	35
1563	4	1608	8	1653	1	1698	11
1564	0	1609	8	1654	1	1699	33
1565	0	1610	4	1655	21	1700	40
1566	0	1611	7	1656	6	1701	2
1567	0	1612	10	1657	6	1702	3
1568	39	1613	21	1658	76	1703	4
1569	3	1614	9	1659	86	1704	13
1570	1	1615	20	1660	5	1705	7
1571	0	1616	21	1661	240	1706	5
1572	1	1617	6	1662	407	1707	2
1573	2	1618	11	1663	7	1708	7
1574	0	1619	2	1664	4	1709	5
1575	0	1620	2	1665	1	1710	2
1576	2	1621	14	1666	10	1711	0
1577	27	1622	15	1667	4	1712	0
1578	2	1623	22	1668	0	1713	0
1579	3	1624	32	1669	12	1714	1
1580	1	1625	3	1670	15	1715	2
1581	1	1626	35	1671	24	1716	0
1582	1	1627	17	1672	4	1717	0
1583	9	1628	75	1673	5	1718	0
1584	1	1629	183	1674	1	1719	7
1585	1	1630	114	1675	8	1720	3
1586	6	1631	26	1676	1	1721	0
1587	4	1632	30	1677	23	1722	0
1588	4	1633	33	1678	49	1723	1
1589	5	1634	16	1679	57	1724	0
1590	34	1635	7	1680	11	1725	1
1591	85	1636	19	1681	2	1726	1
1592	7	1637	6	1682	1	1727	1
1593	3	1638	3	1683	16	SUM	3399
1594	1	1639	1	1684	3	Unknown	
1595	8	1640	7	1685	0	year	14
1596	10	1641	6	1686	0		
1597	121	1642	9	1687	0	Total	3413
1598	12	1643	116	1688	1		
1599	2	1644	74	1689	1		
1600	0	1645	17	1690	0		
1601	4	1646	10	1691	2		
1602	5	1647	6	1692	5		

Year	Frequency	Year	Frequency	Year	Frequency	Year	Frequency
1603	10	1648	5	1693	1		
1604	9	1649	399	1694	0		

Table 49 All cases in Scotland, 1561–1727 (SSW)

Count of AccusedRef	Gender			
	Female	Male	Unknown	Total
1561	1			1
1562	2			2
1563	1			1
1568	30	5	4	39
1569		1	1	2
1570		1		1
1572	1			1
1576	2			2
1577	21	5	1	27
1578	2			2
1579	3			3
1580	1			1
1581	1			1
1582		1		1
1583		9		9
1584	1			1
1585	1			1
1586	3	2		5
1587	2		1	3
1588	2	2		4
1589	5			5
1590	19	9	1	29
1591	57	15	4	76
1592	2	2		4
1593	2	1		3
1594	1			1
1595	4		1	5
1596	7	1		8
1597	97	14	1	112
1598	9	2		11
1599	1	1		2
1601		3		3
1602	3	2		5
1603	6	3	1	10
1604	7	1	1	9
1605	2	1		3
1606	2			2
1607	2	1		3
1608	6	1		7
1609	3			3
1610	2	2		4
1611	5		1	6
1612	7	2	1	10
1613	15	6		21

Count of AccusedRef	Gender			
	Female	Male	Unknown	Total
1614	6			6
1615	14	1		15
1616	16	5		21
1617	4	2		6
1618	8	2	1	11
1619	2			2
1620		2		2
1621	13	1		14
1622	14	1		15
1623	18	2		20
1624	26	3		29
1625	1			1
1626	28	5	1	34
1627	14	3		17
1628	66	6		72
1629	150	29	1	180
1630	95	15	2	112
1631	18	5	1	24
1632	26	2		28
1633	24	9		33
1634	11	5		16
1635	7			7
1636	16	3		19
1637	4	2		6
1638	3			3
1639	1			1
1640	5		1	6
1641	4	1		5
1642	6	1		7
1643	97	8		105
1644	65	3		68
1645	15	1		16
1646	9			9
1647	6			6
1648	3	1		4
1649	314	53	1	368
1650	160	27	2	189
1651	4			4
1652	2	1		3
1653	1			1
1654		1		1
1655	10	10	1	21
1656	5	1		6
1657	6			6
1658	65	9	2	76
1659	78	7		85
1660	4			4
1661	214	19	1	234
1662	333	63	8	404
1663	5	1		6

Count of AccusedRef	Gender			
Case Date	Female	Male	Unknown	Total
1664	3			3
1665	1			1
1666	9			9
1667	3			3
1669	6	2	2	10
1670	10	3		13
1671	19	5		24
1672	4			4
1673	5			5
1674	1			1
1675	8			8
1676	1			1
1677	17	6		23
1678	45	2	2	49
1679	48	9		57
1680	11			11
1681	2			2
1682	1			1
1683	14	2		16
1684	2	1		3
1688	1			1
1689		1		1
1691	1	1		2
1692	4			4
1693	1			1
1695	2			2
1696	1			1
1697	19	11		30
1698	8			8
1699	26	3	1	30
1700	33	6		39
1701	2			2
1702	3			3
1703	3	1		4
1704	13			13
1705	4	1		5
1706	2	3		5
1707	1	1		2
1708	6	1		7
1709	5			5
1710	1	1		2
1714	1			1
1715	2			2
1719	5		1	6
1723	1			1
1725	1			1
1727	1			1
Unknown	7	5		12
Grand Total	2698	468	46	3212

Table 50 Gender of accused persons 1561–1727, Scotland

Chi-square test		Panic years and gender		
		Female	Male	
Non-panic		888	191	1079
Panic		1810	277	2087
		2698	468	3166
Expected		919.5	159.5	
		1778.5	308.5	
Actual – Expected		-31.5	31.5	
		31.5	-31.5	
Decomposed Chi-Square		1.079	6.222	
		0.558	3.217	
1 degree of freedom				
Chi-square statistics		11.076		

Table 51 Chi-square, panic versus non-panic periods and gender, Scotland

Chi-square test			
	Executed	Not Executed	
Non-panic years	94	83	177
Panic years	112	18	130
	206	101	307
Expected	119	58	
	87	43	
Actual - Expected	-25	25	
	25	-25	
Decomposed Chi-Square	5.165	10.535	
	7.033	14.344	
1 degree of freedom			
Chi-square statistics		37.078	

Table 52 Chi-square, panic versus non-panic periods and execution, Scotland

Chi-square test		Females executed in panic vs non-panic years	
		Execution	Not executed
Non-panic years		75	68
			143

Panic years	100	16	116
	175	84	259
Expected	96.6	46.4	
	78.4	37.6	
Actual – Expected	-21.6	21.6	
	21.6	-21.6	
Decomposed Chi-Square	4.838	10.080	
	5.965	12.426	
1 degree of freedom			
Chi-square statistics	33.309		

For 1 degree of freedom $P(\chi^2 > 6.635) = 0.01$ and $P(\chi^2 > 3.841) = 0.05$

Table 53 Chi-square, females executed in panic versus non-panic periods, Scotland

Chi-square test	Males executed in panic vs non-panic years			
	Execution	Not executed		
Non-panic years	16	14	30	
Panic years	12	2	14	
	28	16	44	
Expected	19.1	10.9		
	8.9	5.1		
Actual – Expected	-3.1	3.1		
	3.1	-3.1		
Decomposed Chi-Square	0.500	0.876		
	1.072	1.877		
1 degree of freedom				
Chi-square statistics	4.325			

Table 54 Chi-square, males executed in panic versus non-panic periods, Scotland

Count of Trialref	TrialType				
Case_Year	Central	Local	Mixed	Unknown	Total
1563	1				1
1568		38			38
1569		1			1
1570	1				1
1572	1				1
1576	1				1
1577	2	25		1	28
1578		2			2

Count of Trialref	TrialType				
Case_Year	Central	Local	Mixed	Unknown	Total
1579		3			3
1580		1			1
1582			1		1
1583		9			9
1584			1		1
1586		5			5
1587	1	2			3
1588	1		2	1	4
1589		2	3	3	8
1590	9	13	2	17	41
1591	5	10		67	82
1592	1	1		2	4
1593	2	1		2	5
1594		1		1	2
1595		3			3
1596	5	2		1	8
1597	4	70		35	109
1598	4	7		1	12
1599		1			1
1601		1			1
1602		4			4
1603	1	5		5	11
1604		4		2	6
1605	1	1		2	4
1607	2	1			3
1608	1	3		5	9
1609		3			3
1610	2			1	3
1611		4		1	5
1612		10		1	11
1613		17	1	4	22
1614		1	2		3
1615		10	1	1	12
1616		17			17
1617		5			5
1618		11		2	13
1620		1			1
1621		13		3	16
1622	1	14		1	16
1623	1	19		2	22
1624		29		3	32
1625		1			1
1626		30			30
1627		16			16
1628		62	1	3	66
1629	12	152		50	214
1630	3	100	1	12	116
1631	3	17		3	23
1632	1	26	1	2	30
1633	2	29		4	35
1634	1	9		3	13

Count of Trialref	TrialType				
Case_Year	Central	Local	Mixed	Unknown	Total
1635		7			7
1636		18			18
1637		6		1	7
1638		3			3
1639		1			1
1641		3			3
1642		7		1	8
1643	5	56		15	76
1644		38		13	51
1645	2	10			12
1646		8		3	11
1647		5			5
1648		2		1	3
1649	1	299	1	82	383
1650		168		21	189
1651		2			2
1652		1			1
1653		1			1
1655			16		16
1656	2		2		4
1657	1	1			2
1658	3	7	53	19	82
1659		15	31	54	100
1660		2		1	3
1661	27	144	17	97	285
1662	8	208	3	187	406
1663		5			5
1664		1			1
1665		1			1
1666		9			9
1667	1	2			3
1669		10		2	12
1670	2	2			4
1671			22		22
1672		1	1	1	3
1673		6		1	7
1674	1				1
1675	4	1		1	6
1677		13	7		20
1678	22	10		34	66
1679		7	35	18	60
1680	1	2	6	2	11
1682	1				1
1683			15		15
1688		1	1		2
1691		1			1
1692		1			1
1693		1			1
1696			1		1
1697			25	2	27
1698		2			2

Count of Trialref	TrialType				
Case_Year	Central	Local	Mixed	Unknown	Total
1699	3	4	23		30
1700	25	11	2		38
1704		2	2	2	6
1705		1	2	2	5
1706		4			4
1708		3	4	1	8
1709		1	6	1	8
1710			2		2
1719		6			6
1725		2			2
Unknown year		2			2
Total	178	1936	293	803	3210

Table 55 Types of trial by year, Scotland

	Central	Local	Mixed central local	Central	Local	Mixed central local
Case Year	Female	Female	Female	Male	Male	Male
1563	1					
1564						
1565						
1566						
1567						
1568		29			5	
1569					1	
1570				1		
1571						
1572	1					
1573						
1574						
1575						
1576	1					
1577	2	19			5	
1578		2				
1579		3				
1580		1				
1581						
1582						1
1583					9	
1584			1			
1585						
1586		3			2	
1587	1	1				
1588	1		1			1

	Central	Local	Mixed central local	Central	Local	Mixed central local
Case Year	Female	Female	Female	Male	Male	Male
1589		2	3			
1590	6	10	1	3	2	1
1591	3	6		2	4	
1592		1		1		
1593	1	1		1		
1594		1				
1595		2				
1596	4	2		1		
1597	3	63		1	6	
1598	4	5			2	
1599		1				
1600						
1601					1	
1602		2			2	
1603		4		1	1	
1604		4				
1605		1		1		
1606						
1607	1	1		1		
1608	1	2			1	
1609		3				
1610	1			1		
1611		4				
1612		7			2	
1613		13			4	1
1614		1	2			
1615		9	1		1	
1616		14			3	
1617		3			2	
1618		8			2	
1619						
1620					1	
1621		12			1	
1622	1	13			1	
1623		18		1	1	
1624		26			3	
1625		1				
1626		24			5	
1627		13			3	
1628		56	1		6	
1629	7	132		4	20	
1630	1	87	1	2	11	
1631	1	15		2	2	
1632	1	24	1		2	
1633		22		2	7	

	Central	Local	Mixed central local	Central	Local	Mixed central local
Case Year	Female	Female	Female	Male	Male	Male
1634	1	5			4	
1635		7				
1636		16			2	
1637		4			2	
1638		3				
1639		1				
1640						
1641		3				
1642		6			1	
1643	4	51		1	5	
1644		35			3	
1645	2	10				
1646		8				
1647		5				
1648		2				
1649	1	254	1		44	
1650		146			20	
1651		2				
1652		1				
1653		1				
1654						
1655			7			9
1656	1		2	1		
1657	1	1				
1658	2	7	46	1		6
1659		14	29		1	2
1660		2				
1661	25	131	16	2	12	1
1662	6	183	3	1	24	
1663		4			1	
1664		1				
1665		1				
1666		9				
1667	1	2				
1668						
1669		6			2	
1670	2	2				
1671			18			4
1672		1	1			
1673		6				
1674	1					
1675	4	1				
1676						
1677		9	6		4	1
1678	20	10		1		

	Central	Local	Mixed central local	Central	Local	Mixed central local
Case Year	Female	Female	Female	Male	Male	Male
1679		6	27		1	8
1680	1	2	6			
1681						
1682	1					
1683			13			2
1684						
1685						
1686						
1687						
1688		1	1			
1689						
1690						
1691		1				
1692		1				
1693		1				
1694						
1695						
1696			1			
1697			15			10
1698		2				
1699	3	3	20			3
1700	21	8	2	4	3	
1701						
1702						
1703						
1704		2	2			
1705		1	1			1
1706		2			2	
1707						
1708		2	4		1	
1709		1	6			
1710			1			1
1711						
1712						
1713						
1714						
1715						
1716						
1717						
1718						
1719		5				
1720						
1721						
1722						
1723						

	Central	Local	Mixed central local	Central	Local	Mixed central local
Case Year	Female	Female	Female	Male	Male	Male
1724						
1725		2				
Total	139	1663	240	36	250	52

Table 56 Trial type and gender, Scotland

Chi-square test						
	TrialType	Central	Local	Mixed Central Local		Total
	Female	139	1663	240		2042
	Male	36	250	52		338
		175	1913	292		2380
	Expected values	150	1641	251		2042
		25	272	41		338
	Actual – Expected	-11	22	-11		0
		11	-22	11		0
	Decomposed Chi-Square	0.828	0.286	0.443		
		5.000	1.730	2.674		
	Chi square	10.960		2 degrees of freedom		
For 2 degrees of freedom $P(\chi^2 > 9.210) = 0.01$ and $P(\chi^2 > 5.991) = 0.05$						

Table 57 Chi-square, Trial type and gender, Scotland (SSW)

Female in central, local, and mixed central-local trials and panic versus non-panic years

Chi-square test					
	Female	Central	Local	Mixed central local	
	Non Panic Year	81	488	142	711
	Panic Year	58	1175	98	1331
		139	1663	240	2042
	Expected	48	579	84	711
		91	1084	156	1331
	Actual – Expected	33	-91	58	
		-33	91	-58	
	Decomposed Chi-Square	21.961	14.313	40.862	
		11.731	7.646	21.828	

2 degrees of freedom
Chi-square
118.3409

For 2 degrees of freedom $P(\chi^2 > 9.210) = 0.01$ and $P(\chi^2 > 5.991) = 0.05$
Table 58 Chi-square, Female, trial type and panic versus non-panic year, Scotland (SSW)

Male	Central	Local	Mixed central local	
Non Panic Period	19	92	42	153
Panic Period	17	158	10	185
	36	250	52	338
Expected	16	113	24	153
	20	137	28	185
Actual – Expected	3	-21	18	
	-3	21	-18	
Decomposed Chi-Square	0.449	3.959	14.480	
	0.371	3.274	11.975	
2 degrees of freedom				
Chi-square				34.507
For 2 degrees of freedom $P(\chi^2 > 9.210) = 0.01$ and $P(\chi^2 > 5.991) = 0.05$				

Table 59 Males, trial type and panic versus non-panic years, Scotland

Case Year	Execution	Case Year	Execution	Case Year	Execution
1563		1619		1665	
1568		1620		1666	
1569		1621	1	1667	
1570		1622	1	1669	
1572		1623	1	1669	
1576		1624	4	1670	1
1577	1	1625		1671	2
1578		1626		1672	
1579	2	1627		1673	1
1580		1628	2	1674	
1582		1629	16	1675	4
1583		1630	5	1677	5
1584		1631	4	1678	11
1586		1632	2	1679	
1587	2	1633	4	1680	
1588		1634	1	1682	
1589		1635	1	1683	
1590	3	1636		1688	
1591	6	1637		1691	
1592	1	1638		1692	
1593		1639		1693	
1594	1	1641		1696	
1595	1	1642	1	1697	7
1596	1	1643	11	1698	1
1597	27	1644	8	1699	
1598		1645	2	1700	
1599	1	1646	1	1704	
1601		1647	2	1705	
1602		1648		1706	
1603	1	1649	4	1708	
1604		1650	3	1709	
1605	1	1651		1710	
1607	2	1652		1719	
1608	3	1653		1725	
1609		1655		Unknown year	1
1610	1	1656		Total	230
1611		1657			
1612		1658	4		
1613	1	1659	13		
1614	3	1660			
1615	2	1661	30		
1616	3	1662	11		
1617		1663			
1618	2	1664			

Table 60 ‘Field Execution’, by year, Scotland

Count of Trialref	Sentence												
	CaseYear	Banishment	Branded	Declared Fugitive	Excommuni- Cated	Execution	Hang	Prison	Public Humili-ation	Put to the horn	Released	Unknown	Total
	1563	1											1
	1568											38	38
	1569											1	1
	1570											1	1
	1572					1							1
	1576					1							1
	1577					2						26	28
	1578											2	2
	1579					2					1		3
	1580											1	1
	1582											1	1
	1583											9	9
	1584											1	1
	1586	1										4	5
	1587					2						1	3
	1588											4	4
	1589											8	8
	1590				1	3						37	41
	1591					6						76	82
	1592											4	4
	1593					1						4	5
	1594					1						1	2
	1595					1			1			1	3

Count of Trialref	Sentence												
	CaseYear	Banishment	Branded	Declared Fugitive	Excommuni- Cated	Execution	Hang	Prison	Public Humili-ation	Put to the horn	Released	Unknown	Total
	1596	1				1						6	8
	1597	6				22						81	109
	1598	3										9	12
	1599					1							1
	1601											1	1
	1602											4	4
	1603					1						10	11
	1604											6	6
	1605					2						2	4
	1607					2						1	3
	1608					3						6	9
	1609											3	3
	1610					1						2	3
	1611											5	5
	1612	1										10	11
	1613					1						21	22
	1614					3							3
	1615	1			1	2						8	12
	1616					4						13	17
	1617											5	5
	1618					3						10	13
	1620											1	1
	1621					1						15	16
	1622					1						15	16

[illegible]

Count of Trialref	Sentence												
	CaseYear	Banishment	Branded	Declared Fugitive	Excommuni- Cated	Execution	Hang	Prison	Public Humili-ation	Put to the horn	Released	Unknown	Total
	1648											3	3
	1649					2						381	383
	1650	1				3						185	189
	1651											2	2
	1652											1	1
	1653											1	1
	1655											16	16
	1656											4	4
	1657					1						1	2
	1658	1				4						77	82
	1659					11						89	100
	1660											3	3
	1661	1				24						260	285
	1662	3				8		1				394	406
	1663											5	5
	1664											1	1
	1665											1	1
	1666											9	9
	1667											3	3
	1669					1						11	12
	1670	1				1					1	1	4
	1671					2						20	22
	1672											3	3
	1673					1						6	7

[illegible]

Count of Trialref	Sentence												
	CaseYear	Banishment	Branded	Declared Fugitive	Excommuni- Cated	Execution	Hang	Prison	Public Humili-ation	Put to the horn	Released	Unknown	Total
1725												2	2
Unknown												2	2
Total		27	1	11	6	205	1	1	1	2	52	2903	3210

Table 61 Sentences 1563–1727, Scotland

Count of Trialref	Period P1: 1563 – 1619				
	Trial type				P1 Total
	Central	Local	Mixed Central- local	Unknown trial type	
Sentence					
Banishment	2	12			14
Branded					
Declared Fugitive					
Excommunicated		2			2
Execution	20	42	4		66
Hung					
Prison					
Public Humiliation		1			1
Put to the horn					
Released		1			1
Unknown sentence	23	236	9	155	423
Grand Total	45	294	13	155	507
Scale factor					1.44
Known sentence P1	22	58	4	0	84
% sentence of execution of known sentences	90.9%	72.4%	100.0%		
Prognosis for known trials	41	213	13	0	
Scaled projection including unknown trials	59	307	19	0	
				Total P3	384

Table 62 Sentence execution compared to known sentences and trial types, 1563–1619, Scotland

Period P2: 1620 – 1674					
Sentence	Trial type				P2 Total
	Central	Local	Mixed central - local	Unknown trial type	
Banishment	1	4	3		8
Branded		1			1
Declared Fugitive					
Excommunicated		3			3
Execution	24	55	28		107
Hung					
Prison	1				1
Public Humiliation					
Put to the horn	2				2
Released	1				1
Unknown sentence P1	48	1504	118	585	2255
Total trials	77	1567	149	585	2378
Scale factor					1.33

Known sentence P2	29	63	31	0	
% sentence of execution of known	82.8%	87.3%	90.3%		
Prognosis for known trials	64	1368	135	0	
Scaled projection including unknown trials	85	1814	178	0	
				Total P2	2077

Table 63 Sentence execution compared to known sentences and trial types, 1620–1674, Scotland

Period P3: 1675 – 1725

Trial type

Sentence	Central	Local	Mixed central – local	Unknown trial type	P1 Total
Banishment		4	1		5
Branded					
Declared Fugitive	9		2		11
Excommunicated		1			1
Execution	16	3	13		32
Hung		1			1
Prison					
Public Humiliation					
Put to the horn					
Released	26	3	21		50
Unknown sentence P1	5	61	94	63	223
Total trials	56	73	131	63	323
Scale factor					1.24
Known sentence P3	51	12	37	0	
% sentence of execution of known	31.4%	33.3%	35.1%		
Prognosis for known trials	18	24	46	0	
Scaled projection including unknown trials	22	30	57	0	
				Total P3	109

Table 64 Sentence execution compared to known sentences and trial types, 1675–1725, Scotland

Count of Trialref	Execution		
Case_Year	Sentence Execution Mentioned	Not mentioned	Total executed
1577	1		1
1579	2		2
1587	2		2
1590	3		3
1591	6		6

Count of Trialref	Execution		
Case_Year	Sentence Execution Mentioned	Not mentioned	Total executed
1592		1	1
1594	1		1
1595	1		1
1596	1		1
1597	22	5	27
1599	1		1
1603	1		1
1605	1		1
1607	2		2
1608	3		3
1610	1		1
1613	1		1
1614	3		3
1615	1	1	2
1616	3		3
1618	2		2
1621	1		1
1622	1		1
1623	1		1
1624	2	2	4
1628	1	1	2
1629	12	4	16
1630	5		5
1631	4		4
1632	2		2
1633	4		4
1634	1		1
1635	1		1
1642		1	1
1643	8	3	11
1644	2	6	8
1645	2		2
1646		1	1
1647		2	2
1649	2	2	4
1650	1	2	3
1658	4		4
1659	11	2	13
1661	23	7	30
1662	8	3	11
1670	1		1
1671	2		2
1673	1		1
1675	4		4

Count of Trialref	Execution		
Case_Year	Sentence Execution Mentioned	Not mentioned	Total executed
1677	5		5
1678	11		11
1697	7		7
1698	1		1
Unknown		1	1
Total	186	44	230

Table 65 'Field Execution' detailed, 1577-1698, Scotland

Chi-square test		ImplicatedByAnother_s and p	
	Panic_years	Not mentioned	Mentioned
	Non-Panics	986	205
	Panics	1479	743
		2465	948
			3413
	Expected	860	331
		1605	617
	Actual - Expected	126	-126
		-126	126
	Decomposed Chi-Square	18.402	47.849
		9.864	25.647
1 degree of freedom			
Chi-square statistics		101.762	

For 1 degree of freedom $P(\chi^2 > 6.635) = 0.01$ and $P(\chi^2 > 3.841) = 0.05$

Table 66 Chi-square test, implicated by another, secondary characterisation, Scotland

Year	Persons confessing demonic pact
1576	1
1588	1
1590	2
1591	3
1597	9
1598	1
1616	2
1621	6
1623	9
1624	3
1626	2
1628	17

Year	Persons confessing demonic pact
1629	7
1630	2
1631	3
1632	3
1633	2
1635	3
1643	5
1644	4
1645	1
1647	2
1649	31
1650	30
1651	1
1656	1
1658	13
1659	23
1660	1
1661	60
1662	17
1670	1
1671	4
1673	1
1675	4
1677	11
1678	16
1679	10
1680	4
1683	3
1688	1
1691	1
1697	19
1698	1
1700	6
1705	2
1706	1
1708	1
1709	2
Total	353

Table 67 Demonic pact confessions 1576–1709, panic years shaded, Scotland

FirstName	LastName	Torture Date	Case_date	Res_county	Torturetype	Trial Type
Marjorie	Anderson		2/5/1678	Haddington		2
Mary Nein Goune	Baike	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Burning feet	2
Mary Nein Goune	Baike	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Whip	2
Mary Nein Goune	Baike	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Sleep Deprivation	2
Mary Nein Goune	Baike	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Bound with ropes	2

FirstName	LastName	Torture Date	Case_date	Res_county	Torturetype	Trial Type
Mary Nein Goune	Baike	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Hanging by thumbs	2
Alesoun	Balfour	12/1594	15/12/1594	Orkney	Stocks	2
Alesoun	Balfour	12/1594	15/12/1594	Orkney	Cashielaws	2
Elspeth	Chousley	5/1678	9/9/1679	Haddington		3
Margaret	Comb		27/3/1680	Linlithgow		3
Mary McFinley Vic	Comes	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Sleep Deprivation	2
Mary McFinley Vic	Comes	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Hanging by thumbs	2
Mary McFinley Vic	Comes	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Whip	2
Mary McFinley Vic	Comes	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Burning feet	2
Mary McFinley Vic	Comes	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Bound with ropes	2
Kathrin Ninian Ear Vic Ean	Culleam	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Burning feet	2
Kathrin Ninian Ear Vic Ean	Culleam	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Bound with ropes	2
Kathrin Ninian Ear Vic Ean	Culleam	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Sleep Deprivation	2
Kathrin Ninian Ear Vic Ean	Culleam	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Hanging by thumbs	2
Kathrin Ninian Ear Vic Ean	Culleam	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Whip	2
Mary	Cunningham		4/2/1645	Fife	Irons	2
Mary	Dollour	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Hanging by thumbs	2
Mary	Dollour	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Burning feet	2
Mary	Dollour	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Whip	2
Mary	Dollour	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Bound with ropes	2
Mary	Dollour	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Sleep Deprivation	2
Margaret	Dron	1/1662	1/4/1662	Perth	Sleep Deprivation	2
Marjorie (Marion)	Durie		13/9/1649	Fife		2
Marjorie (Marion)	Durie		13/9/1649	Fife	Stocks	2
Michael	Erskine		2/4/1630	Edinburgh	Sleep Deprivation	1
John	Feen		26/12/1590	Haddington		1
Gormyle	Grant		4/9/1662	Inverness	Sleep Deprivation	2
Gormyle	Grant		4/9/1662	Inverness	Burning feet	2
Gormyle	Grant		4/9/1662	Inverness	Bound with ropes	2
Gormyle	Grant		4/9/1662	Inverness	Whip	2
Gormyle	Grant		4/9/1662	Inverness	Hanging by thumbs	2
Geillis	Gray	2/1598	1598	Fife	Various	2
Marion	Greinlaw		30/1/1662	Edinburgh		2
Helene	Hamiltoun	1632	7/3/1632	Edinburgh	Irons	2

FirstName	LastName	Torture Date	Case_date	Res_county	Torturetype	Trial Type
Helene	Hamiltoun	1632	7/3/1632	Edinburgh	Stocks	2
Janet	Hardie		9/6/1629	Edinburgh	Stocks	2
Janet	Hardie		9/6/1629	Edinburgh	Irons	2
Margaret	Hewingston		29/7/1661	Edinburgh		2
Eupham	Hougan	1/1662	1/4/1662	Perth	Sleep Deprivation	2
Elizabeth	Hutcheson		3/4/1680	Linlithgow		3
Margaret	Hutchison		18/9/1661	Edinburgh		1
Mary Muarn Vic	Innish	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Sleep Deprivation	2
Mary Muarn Vic	Innish	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Hanging by thumbs	2
Mary Muarn Vic	Innish	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Burning feet	2
Mary Muarn Vic	Innish	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Bound with ropes	2
Mary Muarn Vic	Innish	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Whip	2
David	Johnston		29/7/1661	Edinburgh	Haircloth	3
Agnes	Kelly		2/5/1678	Haddington		2
Agneis	Kirkland	4/1650	9/4/1650	Haddington	Sleep Deprivation	2
Agneis	Kirkland	4/1650	9/4/1650	Haddington	Sleep Deprivation	2
Andrew	Laidlay		3/7/1671	Roxburgh		3
Betty (Beatrix)	Laing		20/5/1709	Fife	Stocks	3
Betty (Beatrix)	Laing		20/5/1709	Fife	Sleep Deprivation	3
Katharine	Liddell	7/1678	13/9/1678	Haddington	Sleep Deprivation	2
Christian	Lockhart		9/9/1679	Haddington		3
Janet	Love	1632	5/6/1632	Renfrew	Stocks	2
Janet	Love	1632	5/6/1632	Renfrew	Wedges on the shins	2
Janet	Love	1632	5/6/1632	Renfrew	Bow strings	2
Ewfame	Makcalzene		15/6/1591	Edinburgh	Tied to pole	1
Issobell	Marshall	1/1662	1/4/1662	Perth	Sleep Deprivation	2
Jonet	Mathie		20/2/1677	Renfrew	Stocks	3
Jonet	McCleane	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Burning feet	2
Jonet	McCleane	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Sleep Deprivation	2
Jonet	McCleane	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Bound with ropes	2
Jonet	McCleane	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Whip	2
Jonet	McCleane	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Hanging by thumbs	2
Margret	McCleane	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Burning feet	2
Margret	McCleane	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Sleep Deprivation	2
Margret	McCleane	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Bound with ropes	2
Margret	McCleane	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Hanging by thumbs	2
Margret	McCleane	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Whip	2
Kathrin Nein Ferquhar	McEan	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Whip	2

FirstName	LastName	Torture Date	Case_date	Res_county	Torturetype	Trial Type
Kathrin Nein Ferquhar	McEan	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Bound with ropes	2
Kathrin Nein Ferquhar	McEan	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Hanging by thumbs	2
Kathrin Nein Ferquhar	McEan	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Sleep Deprivation	2
Kathrin Nein Ferquhar	McEan	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Burning feet	2
Issobell	McKessock	1/1662	1/4/1662	Perth	Sleep Deprivation	2
Cristian Neil Ferquhar Vic Ean Baik	McNish	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Hanging by thumbs	2
Cristian Neil Ferquhar Vic Ean Baik	McNish	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Whip	2
Cristian Neil Ferquhar Vic Ean Baik	McNish	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Bound with ropes	2
Cristian Neil Ferquhar Vic Ean Baik	McNish	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Burning feet	2
Cristian Neil Ferquhar Vic Ean Baik	McNish	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Sleep Deprivation	2
Jonet Ninian Rory	Mie	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Burning feet	2
Jonet Ninian Rory	Mie	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Hanging by thumbs	2
Jonet Ninian Rory	Mie	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Whip	2
Jonet Ninian Rory	Mie	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Bound with ropes	2
Jonet Ninian Rory	Mie	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Sleep Deprivation	2
Kathrin Nyn Owan Vic	Omnoch	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Sleep Deprivation	2
Kathrin Nyn Owan Vic	Omnoch	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Whip	2
Kathrin Nyn Owan Vic	Omnoch	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Bound with ropes	2
Kathrin Nyn Owan Vic	Omnoch	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Burning feet	2
Kathrin Nyn Owan Vic	Omnoch	6/1662	4/9/1662	Inverness	Hanging by thumbs	2
Bessie	Paton		3/9/1658	Clackmannan		3
Kathrine	Remy	7/1658	23/6/1658	Clackmannan		3
Kathrine	Remy	6/1658	23/6/1658	Clackmannan	Burning feet	3
Elizabeth	Scotland		27/3/1680	Linlithgow		3
David	Steward	4/1650	9/4/1650	Haddington	Sleep Deprivation	2
Agnes	Stewart		27/3/1680	Linlithgow		3
Jonet	Straton		19/9/1591	Haddington		2
Margaret	Tailyeor	6/1658	3/9/1658	Clackmannan	Burning feet	3
Anna	Tait		6/1/1635	Haddington	Stocks	2
Margaret	Thomsone		21/11/1644	Edinburgh	Stocks	2

FirstName	LastName	Torture Date	Case_date	Res_county	Torturetype	Trial Type
Margaret	Thomsone		21/11/1644	Edinburgh	Sleep Deprivation	2
Margaret	Wallace		22/3/1622	Lanark		1
Margaret	Whytt		3/4/1680	Linlithgow		3

Table 68 Name of tortured persons by torture date, case date and torture type, Scotland

Case Year	Neighbhd dispute s
1590	6
1596	1
1597	16
1598	2
1604	2
1607	1
1608	2
1616	1
1622	2
1624	2
1629	10
1631	1
1632	1
1633	4
1634	2
1638	1
1639	1
1643	1
1644	1
1645	2
1649	9
1650	11
1658	5
1659	22
1661	14
1662	7
1671	6
1679	2
1688	2
1699	4
1700	8
1708	3
1709	1
1725	2
Total	155

Table 69 Neighbourhood disputes, by year, Scotland

Chi-square test		Neighbhd_dispute_s		
		Not mentioned	Mentioned	
Panic Years	Non-Panics	957	53	1010
	Panics	2098	102	2200
	Total	3055	155	3210
Expected		961	49	
		2094	106	
Actual – Expected		-4	4	
		4	-4	
Decomposed Chi-Square		0.019	0.367	
		0.009	0.168	
1 degree of freedom				
Chi-square statistics		0.563		

Table 70 Chi-square neighbourhood disputes and panic periods, Scotland

Count of AccusedRef		
Sentence	Neighbhd_dispute_s	Total sentences
Banishment	4	27
Branded	1	1
Declared Fugitive		11
Excommunicated		6
Execution	38	205
Hang		1
Prison		1
Public Humiliation		1
Put to the horn		2
Released	9	52
Unknown	103	2903
Grand Total	155	3210

Table 71 Neighbourhood dispute and sentence, Scotland

Case Year	1572	1576	1577	1588	1590	1591	1597	1598	1607	1608	1612	1615	1616	1623	1628	1629	1630
12:00		1				1	3										1
Bells		1				1											
Bored-Stone						1											
Changeling	1				1						1			1	1		
Elfshot			1		2	1	1		1								
Fairy Blast												1					
Fairy hill						1		1						1			
Good Neighbours	1			1								1					
Green		1		1			3						1			1	
Group of fairies		1		1	1		1						1	1	1		
Horseshoe															1		
Iron															1		
King of Fairy																	
Male fairy (elf)							1						1				
Midnight							1										
Queen of Fairy				1				1									
Rowan							1		1								
Spinning																	
Sunrise							2										
Thorn Tree		1								1							
Well	1																
Grand Total	3	5	1	4	4	4	13	2	2	1	1	2	3	3	3	1	1

Case Year	1631	1633	1634	1643	1644	1647	1649	1650	1658	1659	1660	1661	1662	1670	1671	1677	1678	1697	Total
12:00	1						2			1		3				4		19	36
Bells																			1
Bored-Stone																			1
Changeling				1															6
Elfshot				1	1								3						11
Fairy Blast									1										1
Fairy hill													1			1			6
Good Neighbours						1				1									5
Green					1	1	4	2	2	3	1	7	2		1		1		32
Group of fairies	1	1		1	1	2		1	1	1		1	1						17
Horseshoe			1																1
Iron																			1
King of Fairy						1							1						2
Male fairy (elf)																			2
Midnight	1	1					1		2										6
Queen of Fairy	1												1	1					5
Rowan																			2
Spinning														1					1
Sunrise				1															3
Thorn Tree			1		1				1	1					1				7
Well										1	1						1		4
Total	4	2	2	3	4	5	7	3	7	8	2	11	9	2	2	5	2	19	15
																			0

Table 72 Fairy and elf beliefs by year, Scotland

B Appendix Statistics: Finnmark

- 6 Name_Accused
- 7 Alternative_Name
- 8 Year_Trial_Begin
- 9 Year_Trial_End
- 10 Ethnicity
- 11 Place_of_living
- 12 Place_of_trial
- 13 Gender
- 14 Age_Group
- 15 Marital_Status
- 16 Occupation
- 17 Socioeconomic_Status
- 18 Family_members_mentioned
- 19 Pre_Trial_Actions
- 20 Type_Of_Trial
- 21 Lagmann_Present
- 22 Linked_Trial
- 23 Denounced_by_another_accused
- 24 Accused_person_does_denounce_others
- 25 Reference_to_trials_already_finished_or_ongoing
- 26 Tried_earlier_for_witchcraft
- 27 Tried_earlier_for_other_crimes
- 28 Reference_to_laws_or_quotation_from_laws
- 29 Amtmann_Present
- 30 Amtmann_Questioning
- 31 Fogd_Present
- 32 Underfogd_Present
- 33 Minister_Preparing_the_accused
- 34 Accused_having_evil_domestic_animals
- 35 Other_crimes_than_witchcraft
- 36 Neighbour_Witnesses
- 37 Reputation_Sorcery
- 38 Maleficium_mentioned_as_part_of_charge
- 39 Weather_magic_mentioned
- 40 Healing_mentioned_in_confessions
- 41 Fairies_mentioned_in_confessions
- 42 White_magic_mentioned
- 43 Royal_person_or_official_mentioned_as_part_of_legal_discourse
- 44 Biblical_person_mentioned_in_records
- 45 Religious_motif_mentioned_by_accused
- 46 Calendar_customs
- 47 From_whom_learned_sorcery
- 48 Feeling_after_learning_sorcery
- 49 By_what_means_learning_sorcery
- 50 First_trying_out_sorcery
- 51 Ritual_objects_Performing_sorcery
- 52 Spellcasting_ritual_mentioned
- 53 Spell_phrases_mentioned

54	Magic_Number
55	Motives_for_casting_spells
56	Threat_human_death_or_illness_part_of_charge
57	Human_death_or_illness_caused_by_spells_confessed
58	Threat_animal_death_or_illness_part_of_charge
59	Animal_death_or_illness_caused_by_spells_confessed
60	Range_sorcery
61	Witnesses_against_the_accused
62	Witches_meeting_participation
63	Place_witches_meeting
64	Activities_witches_meeting
65	Likeness_accused_person_at_gatherings
66	Devil_mentioned_by_accused_person
67	Devil_name
68	Likeness_devil_or_apostel_demon
69	Devilish_mentioned
70	Devil_pact_confession
71	Favour_from_devil
72	Devil_mark_mentioned
73	Sex_with_devil
74	Devil_apostle_or_demon_mentioned
75	Name_apostle_or_demon
76	Denial_of_Christianity_mentioned_by_accused_pact_or_learn_sorcer
77	New_name_after_devil_baptism
78	Misuse_holy_names_mentioned_as_part_of_legal_discourse
79	Clerical_person_present_at_court
80	Clerical_person_questioning_accused_before_or_during_trial
81	Witch_pricking
82	Water_ordeal
83	Ghost_mentioned
84	Torture
85	Torture_types
86	Confession
87	Defence_by_equals
88	Bail
89	Verdict
90	Sentence
91	Accused_estate_or_paying_fine_from_est_mentioned_legal_discourse
92	Denial_Christianity_mentioned_legal_discourse
93	Post_trial_notes
94	Received_sacrament_before_execution
95	Indication_accused_came_from_or_have_been_living_further_south
96	Accused_asked_questions_by_other_than_bailiff_DG_lagmann
97	Accused_denied_first
98	Mother_denounced_daughter
99	Daughter_named_mother_as_mentor

Table 73 Variables SPSS, Finnmark

Kristen Skredder [*Kristen Tailor*], 1601, RA, LrV 1601–02, bundle 1
 Morten Olsen Finn, 1601, RA, LrV 1601–02, bundle 1
 Peder Mand, 1610, RA, LrV 1610–11, bundle 2
 Gamle Zare [*Old Zare*], 1610, NLD, Thott, Lil., fo. 39v
 Mons Storebarn, 1610, NLD, Thott, Lil., fo. 39v
 Mons Andersen, 1610, NLD, Thott, Lil., fo. 39v
 Anne, Laurits Pedersen's wife, 1610, NLD, Thott, Lil., fos. 39rv
 Lisbet, Peder Torfindsen's wife, 1612, 39v–40r
 Niels Jonsen Finn, 1617, NLD, Thott, Lil., fo. 40r
 Karen Edisdatter, 1620, SATØ, SF 6, fos. 10v–12v
 Kirsten Sørensdatter, 1621, SATØ, SF 6, fos. 27r–29r
 Guri Olsdatter, 1621, RA, LrV 1621–22, box 3; NLD, Thott, Lil., fo. 41r
 Guri Olufsdatter, 1621, RA, LrV 1621–22, box 3; NLD, Thott, Lil., fos. 41rv
 Kari Olufsdatter, 1621, RA, LrV 1621–22, box 3; NLD, Thott, Lil., fo. 48v
 Mari Jørgensdatter, 1621, RA, LrV 1621–22, box 3; NLD, Thott, Lil., fos. 47v–48r
 Ragnhild Olufsdatter, 1621, RA, LrV 1621–22, box 3
 Siri Knutsdatter, 1621, RA, LrV 1621–22, box 3; NLD, Thott, Lil., fo. 47r
 Marit Olufsdatter, 1621, RA, LrV 1621–22, box 3; NLD, Thott, Lil., fos. 48v–49r
 Lisbeth Nilsdatter, 1621, SATØ, SF 6, 34r–35r
 Ingrid, Torkil Andersen's wife, 1621, SATØ, SF 6, fos. 42rv
 Rasti Rauelsen, 1621, SATØ, SF 6, fos. 43rv
 Finn Thorsen, 1621, SATØ, SF 6, fos. 44rv
 Elsebe Knutsdatter, 1621, RA, LrV 1621–22, box 3; NLD, Thott, Lil., 47rv
 Anne Lauritsdatter, 1621, RA, LrV 1621–22, box 3; NLD, Thott, Lil., fos. 41v–42r
 Mette Torgjærdsdatter, 1621, SATØ, SF 6, fo. 41r
 Anne Edisdatter, 1624, NLD, Thott, Lil., fo. 43v
 Eli Torsteinsdatter, 1624, SATØ, SF 6, fos. 88rv
 Dorte Jensdatter, 1624, SATØ, SF 6, fo. 87r
 Gunhild Olsdatter, 1625, SATØ, SF 6, fos. 94r, 96v
 Oluf Mogensen, 1625, SATØ, SF 6, fos. 96v–97r
 Torben Olsen, 1625, SATØ, SF 6, fos. 96v–97r
 Jakob Pedersen, 1625, SATØ, SF 6, 96v–97r
 Karen Mogensdatter, 1626, SATØ, SF 6, fo. 113r
 Marit Edisdatter, 1626, SATØ, SF 6, fos. 110v, 117rv
 Maren Kristensdatter, 1626, SATØ, SF 6, fo. 110v
 Quive Baardsen, 1627, SATØ, SF 7, fos. 4r–5v
 Jakob Thomsen, 1628, SATØ, SF 7, fo. 36r
 Kaa Anne, 1628, SATØ, SF 7, fos. 41r–42r
 Kari, Jetmund Siversen's wife, 1632, SATØ, SF 7, fos. 115v–117v
 Synnøve, Anders Nordmøring's wife, 1632, RA, LrV 1631–32; SATØ, SF 7, fos. 117v–118v; SATØ, AF, no 2543
 Birgitte, Kristoffer's wife, 1632, SATØ, SF 7, fo. 128r
 Ingeborg Jørgensdatter, 1634, SATØ, SF 6, fos. 94r, 96v, 121v; SATØ, AF, no 2543
 Kirsten, Rasmus Sivertsen's wife, 1634, SATØ, AF, no 2543
 Anne Mattisdatter, 1634, SATØ, AF, no 2543
 Marit, Oluf Møring's wife, 1634, SATØ, AF, no 2543
 Marit Tamisdatter, 1634, SATØ, AF, no 2543
 Sarve Pedersen, 1634, SATØ, AF, no 2543
 Lisbet, Oluf Nilsen's wife, 1638, SATØ, SF 7, fos. 40v–41v, 128rv
 Mari, Østen's wife, 1638, NLD, Thott, Lil., fo. 54r

Nils Rastesen, 1638, NLD, Thott, Lil., fo. 53r
 Solve Andersdatter, 1638, NLD, Thott, Lil., fo. 53v
 Nils Sarresen, 1638, NLD, Thott, Lil., fo. 53r
 Sissel Pedersdatter, 1638, NLD, Thott, Lil., fos. 53v–54r
 Maren, Jon Dass's wife, 1638, NLD, Thott, Lil., fo. 52v
 Mari, Oluf Jonsen's wife, 1649, SATØ, SF 8, fos. 107v–108v
 Smeld Anne [*Anne from Nordland*], 1640, SATØ, SF 8, fo. 67r
 Kirsten Tøs [*Kirsten Wench*], 1640, SATØ, SF 8, fo. 105r
 Marte, Torsten's wife, 1645, SATØ, SF 8, fo. 114v
 Oluf Rasmussen's wife, 1645, RA, LrV 1645–46, box 6
 Maren Jakobsdatter, 1647, SAT, LF 1647–68, fos. 3–5, 24
 Peder Svendsen, 1650, SAT, LF, 1647–68, fo. 41
 Gunhild Amundsdatter, 1652, SATØ, SF 8, fos. 58r–60v
 Mette Danielsdatter, 1652, SATØ, SF 8, fos., 59r, 60r, 61v
 Bodil Danielsdatter, 1652, SATØ, SF 8, fos. 60v–61v, 65r–66r
 Baarne, Willads Klokke's wife [*Willads Bell-Ringer's wife*], SATØ, SF 8, fos. 62r, 67r–

68r

Eli Sigurdsdatter, 1653, SATØ, SF 8, fos. 62r, 107v–108v, 109v
 Birgitte Kristoffersdatter, 1653, SATØ, SF 8, fos. 62r, 108v, 109rv
 Berit Johannesdatter, 1653, SATØ, SF 8, 62r, 109r–110v
 Synnøve Olsdatter, 1653, SATØ, SF 8, 104v–105v, 106v
 Marit Andersdatter, 1653, SAT, LF 1647–68, fo. 25; SATØ, SF 8, fos. 102v–104v
 Bergitte Edisdatter, 1653, SATØ, SF 8, fos. 105v–106r, 107r
 Lisbet Poulsdatter, 1653, SATØ, SF 8, 113r–114r, 115v
 Anne Pedersdatter, 1653, SATØ, SF 8, 115r, 116r–117r
 Gjertrud Trondsatter, 1653, SATØ, SF 8, fos. 117rv
 Guri Edisdatter, 1653, SATØ, SF 8, fos. 113rv
 Baarne Olsdatter, 1653, SATØ, SF 8, fos. 62r, 114r–115r
 Kirsten Mikkelsdatter, 1653, SAT, LF 1647–68, fo. 62
 Anne Bjørnsdatter, 1653, SAT, LF 1647–68, fo. 62
 Finne-Beret, 1653, SAT, LF 1647–68, fo. 63
 Bergit Simensdatter, 1653, SAT, LF 1647–68, fo. 62
 Siri Tørresdatter, 1653, SAT, LF 1647–68, fo. 63
 Ingeborg Jonsdatter, 1653, SAT, LF 1647–68, fos. 65–66
 Ågot Jakobsdatter, 1653, SAT, LF 1647–68, fo. 66
 Karen Jonsdatter, 1654, SATØ, SF 8, fos. 132v–137v
 Oluf Olufsen, 1654, SATØ, SF 8, fo. 137r
 Inger Tjeraldsdatter, 1654, SATØ, SF 8, fo. 137r
 Peder Dreng, 1654, SATØ, SF 8, fo. 137r
 Marit Rasmusdatter, 1654, SF 9, fos. 3rv, 10v, 12v, 13r, 15v, 16r
 Kirsten Olsdatter, 1655, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 11r–12r
 Siri Kristoffersdatter, 1656, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 12v–13r, 15rv, 20v; SAT, LF 1647–68, fo.

91

Mari Tamisdatter, 1656, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 13rv, 20v; SAT, LF 1647–68, fo. 91
 Mette Nilsdatter, 1656, SATØ, SF 8, fo. 104r; SF 10, fos. 13rv; SAT, LF 1647–68, fo. 92
 Dorte Lauritsdatter, 1662, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 37r–38r, 210v–214r, 227r–231r, 256rv
 Maren Sigvaldsdatter, 1662, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 229r–231r
 Ragnhild Klemetsdatter, 1662, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 230r–231r, 261v
 Maren Mogensdatter, 1662, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 231v–232v, 234v–235v
 Marit Rasmusdatter, 1662, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 233rv, 234v–235v

Marit Hemmingsdatter, 1662, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 234v–235v, 236v
Sigrid Olsdatter, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, 236v–242r
Ingeborg, Peder Krog’s wife, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 248r–249r; SAT, LF 1647–68, fo. 167
Guri, Laurits’s wife, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 247v–248r, 250v–251v
Solve Nilsdatter, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 239r–240r, 248r–251v, 254v
Ellen Gundersdatter, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 252r–256r, 257r
Karen Andersdatter, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 255r–257r
Margrete Jonsdatter, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 222v, 225v–227v, 251r, 258r–260v, 262v, 263v, 265v, 266v
Sigrid Jonsdatter, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 262v–263r, 265v–266r
Gundel Olsdatter, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 263r–266r
Dorte Poulsdatter, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 263v–264r; SAT, LF 1647–68, fo. 165, 166
Barbra Olsdatter, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 266v–270r, 271v–272r, 275v, 277v; SAT, LF 1647–68, fo. 160, 161
Bodil Klausdatter, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 272v–274r, 277rv
Birgitte Olufsdatter, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 274r–275v, 277rv
Karen Olsdatter, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 275v–277v
Karen Iversdatter, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 251v–253r; SAT, LF 1647–68, fos. 151, 152
Ingeborg Iversdatter, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, 242v–244v, 257r–258r; SAT, LF 1647–68, fos. 151, 152
Maren Oelsdatter, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 245r–247v, 252v–253r, 257r–258r, 266v, 270r; SAT, LF 1647–68, fo. 151, 152
Karen Nilsdatter, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 270rv; SAT, LF 1647–68, fo. 152
Ragnhild Endresdatter, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, fos. 261r–262r, 266r; SAT, LF 1647–68, fo. 154,157
Gjertrud Siversdatter, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, 265rv, 277r; SAT, LF 1647–68, fo. 159, 162
Kirsten Sørensdatter, 1663, SATØ, SF 10, 269v; SAT, LF 1647–68, fos. 159, 163
Karen Nilsdatter, 1663, SAT, LF 1647–68, fos. 163, 165
Siri Pedersdatter, 1663, SAT, LF 1647–68, fos. 163, 165
Finne-Eli, 1670, SATØ, SF 13, fos. 5r–7v
Magdalene Jakobsdatter, 1671, SATØ, SF 13, fos. 4v–8r, 13r
Marit Gundersdatter, 1672, SATØ, SF 13, fo. 71v
Mogens Zarasen, 1672, SATØ, SF 13, fos. 79rv
Synnøve Johannesdatter, 1678, SATØ, SF 15, fos. 64r–68r
Kirsten Knutsdatter, 1680, SATØ, SF 15, fo. 68r; SATØ, SF 16, fos. 55r–59r; SAT, LF 1671–83, fos. 74r–77v
Karen Klemmitsdatter, 1680, SAT, LF 1671–83, fos. 84v–85v
Peder Gundersen, 1680, SAT, LF 1671–83, fos. 84v–85v
Gunder Tommesen, 1685, SATØ, SF 20, fos. 30r–31r
Karen Nilsdatter, 1688, SATØ, SF 21, fos. 115r–116r
Birgitte Eriksdatter, 1689, SATØ, SF 23, fos. 3v–5v
Karen Simensdatter, 1690, SATØ, SF 23, fo. 121v
Marit Nilsdatter, 1690, SATØ, SF 23, fos. 186v–187v
Anders Poulsen, 1692, SATØ, SF 25, fos. 1r–8v

Table 74 Accused persons, Finnmark

Year_Trial_ End	Gender		Total
		Male	

	Female		
1601	0	2	2
1610	1	4	5
1612	1	0	1
1617	0	1	1
1620	1	0	1
1621	13	2	15
1624	3	0	3
1625	1	3	4
1626	3	0	3
1627	0	2	2
1628	1	0	1
1632	3	0	3
1634	5	1	6
1638	5	2	7
1640	2	0	2
1645	2	0	2
1647	1	0	1
1649	1	0	1
1650	0	1	1
1652	4	0	4
1653	18	0	18
1654	3	2	5
1655	1	0	1
1656	3	0	3
1662	6	0	6
1663	23	0	23
1670	1	0	1
1671	1	0	1
1672	1	1	2
1678	1	0	1
1680	2	1	3
1685	0	1	1
1688	1	0	1
1689	2	0	2
1690	1	0	1
1692	0	1	1
Total	111	24	135

Table 75 Gender and end of trial, by year, Finnmark

Gender	Linked Trial			Total
	Not enough info	Linked to other trials	No links to other trials	
Female	5	96	10	111
Male	2	14	8	24
Total	7	110	18	135

Table 76 Gender and linked trials, Finnmark

Chi-square test		Linked trials and gender		
		Yes	No/Unkown	
Female		96	15	111
Male		14	10	24
		110	25	135
Expected		90	21	
		20	4	
Actual – Expected		6	-6	
		-6	6	
1 degree of freedom				
Chi-square statistics		10.365		

Table 77 Chi-square test linked trials and gender, Finnmark

	Linked (1)	Not linked (0+2)	
Non-panic periods	43	25	68
Panic periods	67	0	67
	110	25	135
Expected	55.41	12.59	
	54.59	12.41	
Decomposed Chi-Square	2.78	12.22	
	2.82	12.41	
1 degree of freedom			
Chi-square statistics			
30.2306			

Table 78 Chi-square linked trials and panics, Finnmark

	1601-1619	1620-1621*	1622-51	1652-53*	1654-1661	1662-1663*	1664-1692
Female	2	14	27	22	7	29	10
Male	7	2	9	0	2	0	4

Table 79 Panic periods and gender, Finnmark

Chi-square test		Gender		
		Female	Male	
Non-panics		46	22	68
Panics		65	2	67
		111	24	135
Expected		56	12	
		55	12	
Actual – Expected		-10	10	
		10	-10	
1 degree of freedom				
Chi-square statistics		19.913		

Table 80 Chi-square test panics, non-panics and gender, Finnmark

Chi-square test	Panics and demonology		
	Demonology	Not Demonology	
Non-panics	15	53	68
Panics	43	24	67
	58	77	135
Expected	29	39	
	29	38	
Actual – Expected	-14	14	
	14	-14	
1 degree of freedom			
Chi-square statistics			24.433

Table 81 Chi-square panics and the demonic pact, Finnmark

Chi-square test	Panics, female and demonology		
	Demonology	Not Demonology	
Non-panics	15	31	46
Panics	42	23	65
	57	54	111
Expected	24	22	
	33	32	
Actual – Expected	-9	9	
	9	-9	
1 degree of freedom			
Chi-square statistics			11.046

Table 82 Panics, female and the demonic pact, Finnmark

Gender	Type Of Trial				Total
	Not enough info	Local	Court of Appeal (Lagrett)	Ledingsting	
Female	4	77	24	6	111
Male	0	19	3	2	
Total	4	96	27	8	135

Table 83 Type of trial and gender, Finnmark

Chi-square test	Trial type and executed		
	Local Courts	Court of Appeal	
Executed	83	5	88
Not Executed	21	22	43
	104	27	131

Expected	69.9	18.1
	34.1	8.9
Actual - Expected	13.1	-13.1
	-13.1	13.1
1 degree of freedom		
Chi-square statistics	36.516	

For 1 degree of freedom $P(\chi^2 > 6.635) = 0.01$ and $P(\chi^2 > 2.841) = 0.05$
Table 84 Types of trial and sentence execution, Finnmark

Chi-square test			
	Female	Male	
Neighbour quarrels	23	6	29
Not Neighbour quarrels	70	11	81
	93	17	110
Expected	24.5	4.5	
	68.5	12.5	
Actual - Expected	-1.5	1.5	
	1.5	-1.5	
Decomposed Chi-Square	0.094	0.514	
	0.034	0.184	
1 degree of freedom			
Chi-square statistics	0.826		

Table 85 Neighbour quarrels and gender, Finnmark

Place_of_trial	Devil_pact_confession					
	Not enough info	Yes	No	Implicit, i.e. the evil one had taught the craft	In previous trial yes, In present no	Total
	2	1	1	0	0	4
Alta	0	0	1	0	0	1
Gaasnes	0	0	3	0	0	3
Hammerfest	0	0	4	1	0	5
Hasvaag	0	0	2	0	0	2
Hjelmsøy	0	0	1	0	0	1
Kiberg	0	3	4	0	0	7
Kjelvig	0	0	2	0	0	2
Kjelvik	1	0	7	0	0	8
Loppa	0	0	2	0	0	2
Makkaur	0	0	1	2	0	3
Omgang	0	2	5	0	0	7
Skjotningberg	0	0	2	0	0	2
Vadso	2	7	8	1	1	19
Vardo	10	33	19	5	0	67

Place_of_trial	Devil_pact_confession					
	Not enough info	Yes	No	Implicit, i.e. the evil one had taught the craft	In previous trial yes, In present no	Total
Vardo, Kiberg	0	2	0	0	0	2
Total	15	48	62	9	1	135

Table 86 Demonic pact and place of trial, Finnmark

Chi-square test		Demonic pact		
		Yes	No	
Torture		31	11	42
No torture		20	45	65
		51	56	107
Expected		20.0	22.0	
		31.0	34.0	
Actual – Expected		11.0	-11.0	
		-11.0	11.0	
Decomposed Chi-Square		6.024	5.486	
		3.892	3.545	
1 degree of freedom				
Chi-square statistics		18.947		

Table 87 Torture and the demonic pact, Finnmark

Chi-square test		Did deny first		
		Yes	No	
Torture		33	1	34
No torture		29	21	50
		62	22	84
Expected		25.1	8.9	
		36.9	13.1	
Actual - Expected		7.9	-7.9	
		-7.9	7.9	
Decomposed Chi-Square		2.490	7.017	
		1.693	4.772	
1 degree of freedom				
Chi-square statistics		15.972		

Table 88 Torture and cases where accused denied first, Finnmark

Chi-square test		Panics and torture		
		Torture	No torture	
Non-panics		14	54	68
Panics		28	39	67

	42	93	135
Expected	21	47	
	21	46	
Actual – Expected	-7	7	
	7	-7	
1 degree of freedom			
Chi-square statistics	7.079		

Table 89 Torture and panics, Finnmark

Chi-square test	Panics, females and torture		
	Torture	No torture	
Non-panics	8	38	46
Panics	2	63	65
	10	101	111
Expected	4	42	
	6	59	
Actual – Expected	4	-4	
	-4	4	
1 degree of freedom			
Chi-square statistics	6.733		

Table 90 Panics, female and torture, Finnmark

Chi-square test	Linked trials		
	Local (1+3)	Lagrett (2)	
Torture (1+4)	37	4	41
Not torture (2)	48	17	65
	85	21	106
Expected	32.9	8.1	
	52.1	12.9	
Actual - Expected	4.1	-4.1	
	-4.1	4.1	
Decomposed Chi-Square	0.517	2.092	
	0.326	1.320	
1 degree of freedom			
Chi-square statistics	4.255		

Table 91 Types of trial and torture, Finnmark

	Frequency	Percent
Norwegian_Norwegian	111	82.2
Saami_Norwegian	24	17.8

Total	135	100.0
-------	-----	-------

Table 92 Ethnicity of accused persons, Finnmark

Ethnicity	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Norwegian_Norwegian	103	8	111
Saami_Norwegian	8	16	24
Total	111	24	135

Table 93 Ethnicity and gender of accused persons, Finnmark

Chi-square test		Panics and ethnicity		
		Norwegian	Sami	
Non-panics		50	18	68
Panics		61	6	67
		111	24	135
Expected		56	12	
		55	12	
Actual – Expected		-6	6	
		6	-6	
1 degree of freedom				
Chi-square statistics		7.083		

Table 94 Ethnicity and panics, Finnmark

Chi-square test		Reputation Sorcery (not enough info excluded)		
		Yes	No	
Norwegian_Norwegian		79	13	92
Saami_Norwegian		18	2	20
		97	15	112
Expected		79.7	12.3	
		17.3	2.7	
Actual - Expected		-0.7	0.7	
		0.7	-0.7	
Decomposed Chi-Square		0.006	0.037	
		0.027	0.172	
1 degree of freedom				
Chi-square statistics		0.242		

Table 95 Ethnicity and reputation sorcery, Finnmark

Male, ethnicity and reputation sorcery					
Ethnicity	Reputation sorcery	No reputation sorcery		Reputation sorcery	No reputation sorcery
Norwegian_Norwegian	3	1		75.0%	25.0%

Saami_Norwegian	13	0	100%	0%
-----------------	----	---	------	----

Table 96 Male, ethnicity and reputation sorcery, Finnmark

Femal, ethnicity and reputation sorcery					
Ethnicity	Reputation sorcery	No reputation sorcery		Reputation sorcery	No reputation sorcery
Norwegian_Norwegian	76	12		86.36%	13.64%
Saami_Norwegian	5	2		71.43%	28.57%

Table 97 Female, ethnicity and reputation sorcery, Finnmark

Chi-square test		Not Known excluded	
		Female	Male
Neighbour witness		34	14
No NW		53	1
		87	15
			48
			54
			102
Expected		40.9	7.1
		46.1	7.9
Actual – Expected		-6.9	6.9
		6.9	-6.9
Decomposed Chi-Square		1.177	6.825
		1.046	6.067
1 degree of freedom			
Chi-square statistics		15.115	

Table 98 Neighbour witnesses and gender of accused, Finnmark

Chi-square test		Linked (1)	Not Linked (2)	
Neighbour witness		33	14	47
No NW		52	2	54
		85	16	101
Expected		39.6	7.4	
		45.4	8.6	
Actual – Expected		-6.6	6.6	
		6.6	-6.6	
Decomposed Chi-Square		1.086	5.770	
		0.945	5.022	
1 degree of freedom				
Chi-square statistics		12.824		

Table 99 Neighbour witnesses and linked trials, Finnmark

TrialType	Gender		
	Female	Male	Total
1: Central		1	1
2: Local	52	7	59
4: Unknown	12		12
Total	64	8	72

Table 102 Trial type and gender, Orkney

Orkney Sentence	Gender		
	Female	Male	Total
Banishment	2		2
Branded	1		1
Execution	12		12
Unknown	49	8	57
Total	64	8	72

Table 103 Sentence and gender, Orkney

	FirstName	LastName	Sex	AccusedRef	CaseRef	Case Year
1	Nicole	Culsetter	Male	A/LA/2906	C/LA/3044	1602
2	Mareoun	Geilsdochter	Female	A/LA/2903	C/LA/3041	1602
3	Poile	Watson	Male	A/LA/2904	C/LA/3042	1602
4	Wife of Poil	Watson	Female	A/LA/2905	C/LA/3043	1602
5	Jonat	Archibald	Female			1602
6	Mareoun	in Houle	Female	A/LA/2907	C/LA/3045	1603
7	Nicole	Swannesoun	Male	A/EGD/2128	C/EGD/2186	1603
8	Catherine	Thomasdochter	Female	A/LA/2908	C/LA/3046	1603
9	Mareoun	Cromertie	Female	A/LA/2909	C/LA/3047	1604
10	Andrew	Duncane	Male	A/EGD/2132	C/EGD/2190	1604
11	John	Faw	Male	A/EGD/2140	C/EGD/2201	1612
12	Jonet	Dynneis	Female	A/LA/2911	C/LA/3052	1616
13	Katherine	Jones dochter	Female	A/EGD/2159	C/EGD/2220	1616
14	Patrick	Petersone	Male	A/EGD/2156	C/EGD/2217	1616
15	Marjorie	Ritchie	Female	A/EGD/2157	C/EGD/2218	1616
16	Barbara	Scord	Female	A/EGD/2158	C/EGD/2219	1616
17	Juenit	Fraser	Female	A/EGD/2248	C/EGD/2313	1644
18	Marion	Peebles	Female	A/EGD/2261	C/EGD/2327	1644
19	Marget	Bigland	Female	A/EGD/1720	C/EGD/1737	1673
20	Magnus	Laurenson	Male			1674
21	Molphrie	Porteous	Female	A/EGD/1721	C/EGD/1738	1673
22	Bessie	Unknown	Female	A/EGD/1722	C/EGD/1739	1673
23	Suna	Voe	Female	A/EGD/1723	C/EGD/1740	1673
24	Helen	Stewart	Female	A/JO/2919	C/JO/3056	1675
25	Helen Stewart's mother		Female			1675
26	Ellen	King	Female	A/EGD/1903	C/EGD/1946	1700
27	Barbara	Tulloch	Female	A/EGD/1904	C/EGD/1947	1700
28	Katreen	Ratter	Female	A/JO/2877	C/JO/3013	1708
29	Elizabeth	Ratter	Female	A/JO/2876	C/JO/3012	1708
30	Andrew	Ratter	Male	A/JO/2879	C/JO/3015	1708
31	Margaret	Watson	Female	A/JO/2878	C/JO/3014	1725

Table 104 List of accused persons, by year, Shetland

C Appendix Orkney and Shetland

Count of AccusedRef	Orkney			Shetland				Total
	Gender		Orkney Total	Gender			Shetland Total	
	Female	Male		Female	Male	Unknown Gender		
Case Date	Female	Male	Orkney Total	Female	Male	Unknown Gender	Shetland Total	
1594	1		1					1
1596		1	1					1
1602				2	2		4	4
1603				1		1	2	2
1604				1	1		2	2
1612					1		1	1
1615	4		4					4
1616	8	3	11	5	1		6	17
1623	1		1					1
1624	3		3					3
1629	3		3					3
1630	1		1					1
1633	5	2	7					7
1635	2		2					2
1643	21	3	24					24
1644	3		3	2			2	5
1645	2		2					2
1648	1		1					1
1649	1		1					1
1653	1		1					1
1658	1		1					1
1659	1		1					1
1665	1		1					1
1672	1		1					1
1673				4			4	4
1675	1		1					1
1700				2			2	2
1708	1		1	1	1		2	3
1725				1			1	1
Unknown year				2			2	2
Total	63	9	72	21	6	1	28	100

Table 100 Total accused and gender, by year, Orkney and Shetland

Count of WDB_Accused_AccusedRef SocioecStatus	Gender		
	Female	Male	Total
Lairds/Baron		1	1
Lower	4		4
Very Poor	3	1	4
Unknown Socieconomic Status	57	6	63
Grand Total	64	8	72

Table 101 Socioeconomic status and gender, Orkney

Count of AccusedRef Case Date	Sex		
	Female	Male	Total
1602	3	2	5
1603	2	1	3
1604	1	1	2
1612		1	1
1616	4	1	5
1644	2		2
1673	4		4
1674		1	1
1675	2		2
1700	2		2
1708	2	1	3
1725	1		1
Total	23	8	31

Table 105 Accused persons and gender, by year, Shetland

Bibliography

Primary manuscript sources

Manuscript in private hands, Bressay

Proceedings against Marion Pardoun, 1644, in possession of John and Wendy Scott, Gardie House, Bressay, Shetland

National Library of Denmark, Copenhagen

Lilienskiold, H. H., 'Troldom oc anden ugudelighed udi dette seculo sig hafuer tildragen blant fin som Nordmand' [Sorcery and Ungodliness which has happened in this century among Sami as well as Norwegian], Thott's collection, 950,2°.

Edinburgh City Archives, Edinburgh

Edinburgh Town Treasurer's Accounts, iv, (1612–23)

National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh

Books of Adjournal, JC2/6

Circuit Court Books, JC10/4

Stirling Presbytery records, CH2/722/6

Rothsay Kirk Session Book, CH2/890/1

Orkney Library and Archive, Kirkwall

Marwick Collection, D31/4/4

Orkney Presbytery Records, CH2/1082/1

British Library, London

Egerton MS 2879

Riksarkivet, Oslo [National Archives of Norway]

Lensregnskap for Vardøhus len, Rentekammeret [District Accounts for Vardøhus District, The Exchequer], 1600–92

Regional State Archives of Tromsø, Tromsø [Regional State Archives of Tromsø]

Amtmannen i Finnmarks arkiv [The Archives of the Regional Governor of Finnmark], no. 2543, copies of sentences 1631–70

Sorenskriveren i Finnmarks arkiv [The Archives of the Magistrate of Finnmark], no. 6, Records of court proceedings 1620–27

Sorenskriveren i Finnmarks arkiv [The Archives of the Magistrate of Finnmark], no. 10, Records of court proceedings 1654–63

Sorenskriveren i Finnmarks arkiv [The Archives of the Magistrate of Finnmark], no. 25, Records of court proceedings 1692–95

Regional State Archives of Trondheim, Trondheim [Regional State Archives of Trondheim]

Lagtingsprotokoll for Nordland og Finnmark [Court records Court of Appeal for Nordland and Finnmark], 1647–68

Shetland Museum and Archives, Lerwick

Shetland Presbytery Records, CH2/1071/1

Primary printed sources

- Barclay, R. S. (ed.), *The Court Book of Orkney and Shetland 1612-1613* (Kirkwall, 1962)
- Brown, P. H. et al. (eds.), *The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland*, 38 vols. (Edinburgh, 1908-70)
- Cameron, J. and Imrie, J. (eds.), *Justiciary Records of Argyll and the Isles, 1664-1705*, 2 vols., (SS, 1949-69)
- Donaldson, G. (ed.), *Court Book of Shetland 1615-1629* (Lerwick, 1991)
- Donaldsen, G. (ed.), *The Court Book of Shetland 1602-1604* (Edinburgh, 1954)
- Fellman, I., *Handlingar och uppsatsar angående finska lappmarken och lapparne*, i, (Helsingfors, 1910)
- Hagen, R., and Sparboe, P. E., (ed.), H. H. Lilienskiold, *Trolldom og ugudelighet i 1600-tallets Finnmark* [Sorcery and Ungodliness in seventeenth century Finnmark] (Tromsø, 1998)
- MacPhail, J. R. N. (ed.), 'Papers related to Witchcraft 1662–1677' in *Highland Papers*, 4 vols. (SHS, 1914-34), iii, 3-30
- Pitcairn, R. (ed.), *Criminal Trials in Scotland, 1488-1624*, 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1833), iii, part I. *Records from the Earldom of Orkney, 1299-1614*, vii, 2nd series (SHS, 1914)
- Sandvik, H. and Winge, H. (eds.), *Tingbok for Finnmark 1620-33* [Records of Court Proceedings for Finnmark 1620–1633] (Oslo, 1987)
- Thomson, T. and Innes, C. (ed.), *The Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*, 12 vols. (Edinburgh, 1814-75)
- Thomson, J. M. et al. (eds.), *Registrum Magni Sigilli Regum Scotorum* (Register of the Great Seal of Scotland) (Edinburgh, 1882-)

Secondary Sources

- Agrell, S., *Lapptrummor och runmagi* (Lund, 1934)
- Alm, E., *Statens rolle i trolldomsprosessene i Danmark og Norge på 1500- og 1600-tallet. En komparativ undersøkelse* [The role of the state during the witchcraft trials in Denmark and Norway in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. A comparative study] (University of Tromsø, Master's thesis, 2000)
- Alm, T., 'The Witch Trials of Finnmark, Northern Norway, during the 17th century: Evidence for Ergotism as a Contributing Factor', *Economic Botany*, 57, iii (2003), 403–16
- Ankarloo, B., 'Sweden: The Mass Burnings (1668–76), in Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen (eds.), *Early Modern European Witchcraft. Centres and Peripheries* (Oxford, 1993), 295–96
- Andersen, B., 'Danske Lov' 1683 [Danish Law of 1683] (København, 2003)
- Anderson, P. D., *Black Patie* (Edinburgh, 1992)
- Anderson, P. D., *Robert Stewart. Earl of Orkney, Lord of Shetland* (Edinburgh, 1982)

- Ankarloo, B. and Henningsen, G., *Early Modern European Witchcraft. Centres and Peripheries* (Oxford, 1990)
- Apps, L. and Gow, A. (eds), *Male Witches in Early Modern Europe* (Manchester, 2003)
- Bal, M., *Narratology. Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* (Toronto, 1997)
- Balsvik, R. R., *Vardø. Grensepost og fiskevær 1850–1950*, (Vardø, 1989)
- Barclay, R. S., 'Introduction', in R. R. Barclay (ed.), *Court Books of Orkney and Shetland 1614–1615* (Edinburgh, 1967)
- Baroja, J. C., *The World of the Witches* (Chicago, 1961)
- Behringer, W., *Hexen und Hexenprozesse* (München, 1995)
- Behringer, W., *Shaman of Oberstdorf: Chonrad Stoekhlin and the Phantoms of the Night* (Charlottesville, 1998)
- Behringer, W., *Witches and Witch-Hunts* (Cambridge, 2004)
- Bereday, G. Z. F., *Comparative Method in Education* (New York, 1964)
- Bergh, K., 'Til ild og bål', in G. I. Willoch, (ed.), *Vardøhus festning 650 år* (Oslo, 1960), 126–44
- Black, R., 'Introduction', in R. Black (ed.), *The Gaelic Otherworld* (Edinburgh, 2005)
- Botnheim, R., *Trolldomsprosessene i Bergenhus len, 1566-1700* [Witchcraft trials in Bergenhus district] (University of Bergen, Master's thesis, 1999)
- The Bible* (Geneva, 1560)
- The Holy Bible* (London, 1611), authorised version
- Biblia* (København, 1606), edn. by Hans P. Resen
- Biblia* (København, 1633)
- Broedel, H. P., *The Malleus Maleficarum and the construction of witchcraft* (Manchester, 2003)
- Bäckman, L., *Sájva: föreställningar om hjälp- och skyddsväsen i heliga fjäll bland samerna* (Stockholm, 1975)
- Bäckman, L., 'Types of Shaman: Comparative Perspectives', in Bäckman, L. and Hultkrantz, Å., *Studies in Lapp Shamanism* (Stockholm, 1978), 62–90
- Cameron, J. and J. Imrie, J. (eds.), *The Justiciary Records of Argyll and the Isles 1664–1705*, 2 vols. (SS, 1949-69)
- Campbell, J. G., *Witchcraft and the Second Sight in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland* (Glasgow, 1902)
- Clanchy, M. T., *From memory to written record. England 1066–1307* (Oxford, 1993)
- Clark, S., 'Inversion, misrule and the meaning of witchcraft', *Past and Present*, no. 87 (1980), 98-127
- Clark, S., 'Protestant Demonology: Sin, Superstition, and Society (c.1520–c.1630)', B. Ankarloo and G. Henningsen (eds.), *Early Modern European Witchcraft. Centres and Peripheries* (Oxford, 1993), 45–82
- Clark, S., *Thinking with Demons: the idea of witchcraft in early modern Europe* (Oxford, 1997)
- Clouston, J. S., *History of Orkney* (Kirkwall, 1932)
- Cohn, D., *Transparent Minds. Narrative Modes for presenting Consciousness in Fiction* (Princeton, 1983)
- Cohn, D., *The Distinction of Fiction* (Baltimore, 1999)
- Cohn, N., *Europe's Inner Demons* (London, 1993)
- Cordey, A. L., *Witch-hunting in the Presbytery of Dalkeith, 1649 to 1662* (University of Edinburgh, M. Sc., 2003)
- Cowan, E. B., 'The Darker Vision of the Scottish Renaissance: the Devil and Francis Stewart', in I. B. Cowan and D. Shaw (eds.), *The Renaissance and Reformation in Scotland. Essays in Honour of Gordon Donaldson* (Edinburgh, 1983)
- Craigie, W. A., *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue*, 12 vols. (Chicago, 1931)
- Dalyell, G., *The Darker Superstitions of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1834)

- Davidson, P., *The Idea of North* (London, 2005)
- Davis, N. Z., *Fiction in the Archives. Pardon Tales and their Tellers in Sixteenth Century France* (Cambridge, 1987)
- Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto, 1966)
- Dillinger, J., 'Trier, Electorate of', in Golden (ed.), *Encyclopedia*, 4 vols., iv, 1135–6
- Donaldson, G., 'The Scots Settlement in Shetland', in D. J. Withrington (ed.), *Shetland and the Outside World 1469–1969* (Oxford, 1983), 8–19
- Egede, H., *Grønlands Nye Perlustration eller Naturel-Historie* (Copenhagen, 1742)
- Elstad, Å., *Moteløver og heimføingar: tekstilar samfunnsendringar i Øksnes og Astafford 1750–1900* (Stamsund, 1997)
- Falkanger, A. T., *Lagmann og lagting i Hålogaland gjennom 1000 år* [Court of Appeal Judge and Court of Appeal in Hålogaland during 1000 years] (Oslo, 2007)
- Favret-Saada, J., *Deadly Words: Witchcraft in the Bocage* (Cambridge, 1980)
- Fergusson, R. M., 'The Witches of Alloa', *SHR*, v (1908), 40–8
- Fludernik, M., *The fictions of languages and the languages of fiction: the linguistic representation of speech and consciousness* (London, 1993)
- Fludernik, M., *Towards a 'Natural' Narratology* (London, 1996)
- Fox, A., *Oral and Literate Culture in England, 1500–1700* (Oxford, 2000)
- Fox, A., 'Rumour, News and Popular Political Opinion in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England', *The Historical Journal*, 11:3 (1997), 597–620
- Friis, J. A., *Lappisk mytologi. Eventyr og Folkesagn* (Christiania, 1871)
- Friis, P. C., *Norriges Beskriffuelse* (Copenhagen, 1632)
- Fur, G., *Colonialism in the Margins: Cultural Encounters in New Sweden and Lapland* (Leiden, 2006)
- Genette, G., *Fiction & Diction* (Ithaca, 1993), orig. *Fiction et diction* (1991)
- Genette, G., *Narrative Discourse. An Essay in Method* (Paris, 1983), orig. *Discours du récit*
- Genette, G., *Narrative Discourse Revisited* (Ithaca, 1988), orig. *Nouveau discours du récit* (1983)
- Gibson, M., *Early modern witches: witchcraft cases in contemporary writing* (London, 2000)
- Gibson, M., *Reading Witchcraft: stories of early English witches* (London, 1999)
- Gibson, M., *Witchcraft and society in England and America, 1550–1750* (New York, 2003)
- Gibson, M., *Women and witchcraft in popular literature, c.1650–1715* (Aldershot, 2007)
- Ginzburg, C., *Ecstasies: deciphering the Witches' Sabbath* (New York, 2001)
- Godske, C. L., *Statistikk i forskning og praksis* (Oslo, 1966)
- Golden, R. M. (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft. The Western Tradition*, 4 vols. (Santa Barbara, 2006)
- Golden, R. M., 'Satan in Europe: The Geography of Witch Hunts', in B. P. Levack (ed.), *New Perspectives on Witchcraft, Magic and Demonology*, 6 vols., ii: *Witchcraft in Continental Europe* (New York, 2001), 2–33
- 'Gongferd, feigd og spøykjeri. Framsynte folk', *Bøfferding*, (1981), 54–57
- Goodare, J., 'Ergotism', in Golden (ed.), *Encyclopedia*, 4 vols., ii, 321–322
- Goodare, J., 'The Framework for Scottish Witch-Hunting in the 1590s', *SHR*, 81 (2002), 240–50
- Goodare, J., *The Government of Scotland* (Oxford, 2004)
- Goodare, J., 'Men and the witch-hunt in Scotland', in A. Rowlands, (ed.) *Witchcraft and Masculinities in Early Modern Europe* (forthcoming)
- Goodare, J., 'Pricking of suspected witches', in Golden (ed.), *Encyclopedia*, 4 vols., iii, 930–2
- Goodare, J., 'The Scottish Witchcraft Act', *Church History*, lxxiv, no. 1 (2005), 39–67
- Goodare, J., 'The Scottish witchcraft panic of 1597', in J. Goodare (ed.), *The Scottish witch-hunt in context* (Manchester, 2002), 51–72

- Goodare, J., (ed.), *The Scottish witch-hunt in context* (Manchester, 2002)
- Goodare, J., 'Scottish Witchcraft in its European Context', in Goodare et al. (eds.), *Witchcraft and Belief in Early Modern Scotland* (Hampshire, 2008), 26–50
- Goodare, J., 'Witch-hunting and the Scottish state', in J. Goodare (ed.), *The Scottish witch-hunt in context* (Manchester, 2002), 122–45
- Goodare, J., 'Women and the witch-hunt in Scotland', *Social History*, xxiii (1998), 288–307
- Granquist, K., 'Du skal inga andra gudar hava jämta mig', in Bjørn-Petter Finstad (ed.), *Stat, religion, etnisitet* (Tromsø, 1997), 71–88
- Granquist, K., 'Thou shalt have no other Gods before me (Exodus 20:3). Witchcraft and Superstition trials in 17th- and 18th century Swedish Lapland' in P. Skiöld & K. Kram (ed.), *Kulturkonfrontation i Lappmarken* (Umeå, 1998), 13–21
- Grell, O. P., (ed.), *The Scandinavian Reformation* (Cambridge, 1995)
- Grimm, J. and W., *Kinder- und Haus-Märchen* (Berlin, 1819–22)
- Grubbe, S., 'Kongens sjøreise', in R. B. Hagen and P. E. Sparboe, *Kongens reise til det ytterste nord. Dagbøker fra Christian IV's tokt til Finnmark og Kola i 1599* [The king's voyage to the uttermost north. Diaries from Christian IV's travel to Finnmark and Kola in 1599] (Tromsø, 2004)
- Gaasland, R., 'Fra narratologiens tidligste år' [From the earliest years of narratology], in E. Arntzen and R. Gaasland (eds.), *Teorismer* (Tromsø, 1995)
- Hagen, H., 'At the Edge of Civilisation. John Cunningham, lensmann of Finnmark 1619–51', in A. Mackillop and S. Murdoch (eds.), *Military Governors and Imperia Frontiers c. 1600–1800* (Leiden, 2003)
- Hagen, R., *Dei europeiske hekseprosessane* [The European witchcraft trials] (Oslo, 2007)
- Hagen, R., 'Harmløs dissenter eller djevelsk trollmann?', www.ub.uit.no/munin/bitstream
- Hagen, R., 'Female Witches and Sami Sorcerers in the Witch Trials of Arctic Norway', *Arv, Nordic Yearbook of Folklore*, lxii (2006), 123–42
- Hagen, R., 'Sami Shamanism: The Arctic Dimension', *Magic, Rituals, and Witches*, vol. i, no. 2 (2006), 227–33
- Hagen, R., *Hekser. Fra forfølgelse til fortryllelse* [Witches. From persecution to enchantment] (Oslo, 2003)
- Hall, Alaric, *The Meaning of Elf, and Elves, in Medieval England* (University of Glasgow, 2005)
- Harris, R. L., 'Janet Douglas and the Witches of Pollock', in S. R. McKenna (ed.), *Selected Essays in Scottish Language and Literature* (Lewington, 1992), 97–124
- Heikkinen, A., *Paholaisen liitolaisten: Noita- ja magiakäsityksiä Suomessa 1600-luvun jälkipuoliskolla* [Allies of the Devil] (Helsinki, 1969)
- Henderson, L., *Supernatural Traditions and Folk Beliefs in an Age of Transition: Witchcraft and Charming in Scotland, c.1670–1740* (University of Strathclyde, Ph.D. thesis, 2004)
- Henderson, L. and Cowan, E. B., *Scottish Fairy Belief* (East Linton, 2004)
- Henryson, E. (ed.), *Actis and Constitutionis of the Realme of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1566)
- Hodges, J. L. Jr. and Lehmann, E. L., *Basic Concepts of Probability and Statistics* (San Francisco, 1964)
- <http://www.ssb.no/emner/00/00/10/samer/>
- http://www.ssb.no/histstat/art_107.pdf
- Hultkrantz, Å., 'Means and Ends in Lapp Shamanism', in Bäckman, L. and Hultkrantz, Å., *Studies in Lapp Shamanism* (Stockholm, 1978), 40–62
- Hunter, M., 'The Discovery of Second Sight in Late 17th century Scotland', *History today* (June, 2001), 48–53
- Itkonen, T. I., *Heidnischer Religion und Späterer Aberglaube bei den Finnischen Lappen* (Helsinki, 1956)

- Jørgensen, P. J., *Dansk strafferet fra Reformationen til Danske Lov* (København, 2007)
- Jørkov, B., 'Den stærke tromme', *Siden Saxo*, no. 1 (2000), 9–17
- Kallestrup, L. H., 'Maleficium o "abuso di sacramento"?'', *Dansk Historisk Tidsskrift*, cii, no. 2 (2002), 282–305
- Kallestrup, L. H., *Trolldomsforfølgelser og trolldomstro: En komparasjon af det posttridentine Italien og det lutherske protestantiske Danmark i det 16 og 17. århundrede* (University of Aalborg, Ph.D. thesis, 2007)
- Kieckhefer, R., *European Witch Trials* (London, 1976)
- Kiil, A., *Når bøndene seilte* [When the peasants sailed] (Oslo, 1993)
- Kittang, A., 'Merknader til nokre grunntema i narratologien' in *Sju artiklar om litteraturvitenskap* (Oslo, 2001), 77–96
- Knutsen, G. W., 'A central periphery? Witchcraft trials in south-eastern Norway' in S. Sogner (ed.), *Fact, fiction and forensic evidence: the potential of judicial sources for historical research in the early modern period* (Oslo, 1997), 63–74
- Knutsen, G. W., 'The End of the Witch Hunts in Scandinavia', *Arv, Nordic Yearbook of Folklore*, lxii (2006), 143–64
- Knutsen, G. W., 'Norwegian witchcraft trials: a reassessment', *Continuity and Change*, vol. xviii, no. 2 (2003), 185–200
- Knutsen, G. W., *Trolldomsprosessene på Østlandet. En kulturhistorisk undersøkelse* (Oslo, 1998)
- Kyd, J. G. (ed.), *Scottish Popular Statistics including Webster's analysis of population 1755* (Edinburgh, 1952)
- Langbein, J., *Torture and the Law of Proof* (Chicago, 2006)
- Larner, C., 'Crimen Exceptum. The crime of Witchcraft in Europe', in *Witchcraft and Religion* (Oxford, 1984), 48–53
- Larner, C., *Enemies of God: the witch-hunt in Scotland* (Oxford, 1981)
- Larner, C., 'James VI and I and Witchcraft' in Alan G. R. Smith (ed.), *The Reign of James VI and I* (London, 1973)
- Larner, C., Lee, C. H. and McLachlan, H. (eds.), *A Source-Book of Scottish Witchcraft* (Glasgow, 1977)
- Larner, C., 'Was witch-hunting woman-hunting?', *New Society* (8. Oct. 1981), 11–3
- Leem, K., *Beskrivelse over Finmarkens Lapper* (København, 1767)
- Levack, B. P., 'Judicial Torture in Scotland during the Age of Mackenzie', *SS Miscellany*, iv (2002), 185–98
- Levack, B. P., 'The Great Scottish Witch Hunt of 1661–1662', *Journal of British Studies*, xx (1980), 90–108
- Levack, B. P., 'Themes of Recent Witchcraft Research', *Arv, Nordic Yearbook of Folklore*, lxii (2006), 7–32
- Levack, 'Torture', in Golden (ed.), *Encyclopedia*, 4 vols., iii, 1129
- Levack, B. P., 'Introduction', in B. P. Levack (ed.), *New Perspectives on Witchcraft, Magic and Demonology*, 6 vols., ii, *Witchcraft in Continental Europe* (New York, 2001), p. vii–ix
- Levack, B. P., *Witch-hunting in Scotland. Law, Politics and Religion* (New York, 2008)
- Levack, B. P., *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe* (3rd edn., London, 2006)
- Lindhartsen, O., 'Lensherrer, heksejakt og justismord i Finnmark på 1600-tallet' [District Governors, witch-hunt and legal murder in seventeenth century Finnmark], in G. J. Valen, K. Skavhaug, K. Schanche (eds.), *Flytting og forandring i Finnmarks fortid* (Alta, 2002), 58–71
- Low, G., *Tour through Orkney and Shetland* (Kirkwall 1789)
- Macdonald, S., 'Torture and the Scottish Witch-hunt: A Re-examination', *Scottish Tradition*, 28 (2002), 95–114

- Macdonald, S., *The witches of Fife. Witch-hunting in a Scottish Shire, 1560–1710* (East Linton, 2002)
- Macfarlane, A., *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England* (London, 1970)
- Macgregor, A., *Highland Superstitions* (Stirling, 1922)
- Magnus, O., *Historia om de nordiska folken* (Malmø, 1982), orig. *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus* (Roma, 1555)
- Manker, E., *Die lappische Zaubertrommel*, ii (Uppsala, 1950)
- Martin, L., 'The Devil and the domestic: witchcraft, quarrels and women's work' in J. Goodare (ed.) *The Scottish witch-hunt in context*, 73–89
- Martin, L., 'Scottish Witchcraft Panics Re-examined', in Goodare et al., *Witchcraft and Belief in Early Modern Scotland*, (Hampshire, 2007), 119–43
- Martin, L. and Miller, J., 'Some Findings from the Survey of Scottish Witchcraft', in J. Goodare et al. (eds.), *Witchcraft and Belief*, (Hampshire, 2008), 51–70
- Marwick, M. G., *Sorcery in its Social Setting* (Manchester, 1965)
- Maxwell-Stuart, P. G., *An abundance of witches. The Great Scottish Witch-hunt*, (Gloucestershire, 2005)
- Maxwell-Stuart, P. G., 'The fear of the King is death: James VI and the witches of East Lothia', in Naphy, W. G. and Roberts, P., (eds.), *Fear in early modern society* (Manchester, 1997)
- Maxwell-Stuart, P. G., *Satan's Conspiracy: Magic and Witchcraft in Sixteenth-Century Scotland* (East Linton, 2001)
- Maxwell-Stuart, P. G., 'Scotland' in Golden (ed.), *Encyclopedia*, 4 vols., iv, 1019
- McDonald, S. W., 'The Devil's mark and the witch-prickers of Scotland', *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, xc (1997), 507–11
- Mchale, B., 'Free indirect discourse: a survey of recent accounts', *PTL: A Journal for descriptive poetics and theory of literature*, no. 2 (1978), 249–287
- McNeill, P. and Nicholson, R. (ed.), *An Historical Atlas of Scotland c.400 –c.1600* (St Andrews, 1975)
- Meldrum, R. M., (ed.), *Letters from James I to Christian IV, 1603-1625* (Washington, 1977)
- Melville, R. D., 'The Use and Forms of Judicial Torture in England and Scotland', *SHR*, 2 (1905), 225–48
- Miller, J., *Cantrips and Carlins: Magic, Medicine and Society in the Presbyteries of Haddington and Stirling, 1600-1688* (University of Stirling, Ph.D. thesis, 1999)
- Miller, J., 'Devices and directions: folk healing aspects of witchcraft practice in seventeenth century Scotland', in J. Goodare (ed.), *Scottish witch-hunt in context* (Manchester, 2002) 90–95
- Miller, J., *Magic and Witchcraft in Scotland* (Musselburgh, 2004)
- Miller, J., 'Men in Black: Appearances of the Devil in Early Modern Scottish Witchcraft Discourse', in J. Goodare et al. (eds.), *Witchcraft and Belief in Early Modern Scotland* (Hampshire, 2008), 144–65
- Monter, W. E. (ed.), *European Witchcraft* (New York, 1969)
- Muchembled, R., 'Foreword', in Golden (ed.), *Encyclopedia*, 4 vols., i, p. xxvii
- The New Statistical Account of Scotland*, vol. xv (Edinburgh, 1845)
- Nenonen, M., 'Witch Hunts in Europe: A New Geography', *Arv, Nordic Yearbook of Folklore*, lxii (2006), 165–85
- Niemi, E., 'Anders Paulsen (Poulsen, Pouelsen)', in *Norsk biografisk leksikon* (Oslo, 1999)
- Niemi, E., 'Christian 4s Finnmarksreise i 1599', *Årbok for Foreningen til norske fortidsminnesmerkers bevaring* (1988), 17–38
- Niemi, E., 'Hans Hansen Lilienskiold – embetsmann, vitenskapsmann og opprører' in *Portretter fra norsk historie* (Oslo 1993)
- Niemi, E., *Vadsøs historie*, i (Vadsø, 1983)

- Normand, L. and Roberts, G. (eds.), *Witchcraft in early Modern Scotland* (Exeter, 2000)
- Næss, H. E. (ed.), *For rett og rettferdighet i 400 år* [For law and justice during 400 years] (Oslo, 1991)
- Næss, H. E., *Trolldomsprosessene i Norge på 1500–1600-tallet. En retts- og sosialhistorisk undersøkelse* [Witchcraft trials in Norway during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. A legal- and socioeconomical study] (Oslo, 1982)
- Ong, W., *Orality and Literacy. The Technologizing of the Word* (London, 1988)
- Pihlajamäki, H., "'Swimming the Witch, Pricking for the Devil's mark': Ordeals in the Early Modern Witchcraft Trials', *Legal History*, xxi, no. 2 (2000), 35–58
- Pollan, B., *Samiske beretninger*, [Sami stories] (Oslo, 1997)
- Pollan, B., *Samiske sjamaner. Religion og helbredelse* [Sami shamans. Religion and healing] (Oslo, 1993)
- Purkiss, D., *Troublesome Things. A History of Fairies and Fairy Stories* (London, 2000)
- Purkiss, D., *The Witch in History* (London, 1996)
- Quigstad, J., *Kildeskrifter til den lappiske mytologi*, (Trondheim, 1903)
- Rafnsson, M., *The Witch-hunts in Iceland* (Hólmavík, 2003)
- Remy, N., *Demonolatry* (London, 1930), orig. published 1595
- Riis, T., *Should Auld Acquaintance Be Forgot: Scottish-Danish Relations, c.1450–1707*, 2 vols. (Odense, 1988)
- Robertson, J. D. M., *The Kirkwall Ba'. Between the Water and the Wall* (Edinburgh, 2005)
- Robberstad, K., *Retts saga*, I (Oslo, 1976)
- Robberstad, K., 'Udal Law', in D. J. Withrington (ed.), *Shetland and the Outside World 1469–1969* (Oxford, 1983), 49–68
- Rogers, C., *Social Life in Scotland. From Early to Recent Times*, 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1886)
- Roper, L., *Witch Craze. Terror and fantasy in Baroque Germany* (New Haven, 2004)
- Rowlands, A., *Witchcraft narratives in Germany: Rothenburg, 1561–1652* (Manchester, 2003)
- Rummel, W., and Voltmer, R., *Hexen und hexenverfolgung in der Frühen neuzeit* (Darmstadt, 2008)
- Rydving, H., *The End of drum-time: Religious Change among the Lule Saami, 1670s–1740s* (Uppsala, 1995)
- Rydving, H., 'Saami responses to Christianity. Resistance and change', in J. K. Olupona, *Beyond primitivism. Indigenous religious traditions and modernity* (New York, 2004), 99–107
- Schefferus, J., *Lapponia* (Frankfurt am Main, 1673)
- Scott, H., *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae: the Succession of Ministers in the Church of Scotland from the Reformation*, 8 vols. (Edinburgh, rev. edn., 1915–50)
- Scott, W., *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1802)
- Schulte, Rolf, 'Der dänische Reformator: Niels Hemmingsen', in *Hexenverfolgung in Schleswig-Holstein* (Heide, 2001)
- Sinclair, G., *Satan's invisible World Discovered* (Edinburgh, 1685)
- Smith, B., "'Lairds" and "Improvement" in the 17th and 18th century Shetland', in T. M. Devine (ed.), *Lairds and improvement in the Scotland of the enlightenment* (Strathclyde, 1978), 11–20
- Smith, B., *Toons and Tenants* (Lerwick, 2000)
- Smith, B., 'Shetland, Scandinavia, Scotland, 1300–1700: The changing nature of contact', in G. G. Simpson, (ed.), *Scotland and Scandinavia 800–1800*, (Edinburgh, 1990), 25–37
- Solberg, O., *Forteljingar om drap – kriminalhistorier frå seinmellomalderen* [Narratives about murder – criminal stories from the late Middle Ages], (Oslo, 2003)
- Sternberg, M., 'Ordering the Unordered: Time, Space and Descriptive Coherence', *Yale French Studies*, lxi (1981), 60–88

- Sternberg, M., 'Telling in Time (1): Chronology and Narrative Theory', *Poetics today*, no. 4 (1990), 901–48
- Stewart, W. G., *Popular Superstitions and Festive Amusements of the Highlanders* (Edinburgh, 1979), orig. published 1923
- Summers, M., (ed.), *The Malleus Maleficarum of Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger* (New York, 1971). *Malleus Maleficarum* was originally published in 1486
- Sunde, J. Ø., *Speculum legale – rettsspegele* [Speculum legale – the mirror of the law] (Bergen, 2005)
- Svennungsson, L. M., *Rannsakingarna om trolldom i Bohuslän 1669–1672* (Uddevalla, 1970)
- Swales, J. K. and McLachlan, H. V., 'Witchcraft and the status of women: a comment', *British Journal of Sociology*, xxx, no. 3 (1979) 349–58
- Sörlin, Per, *Trolldoms- och vidskepelseprocessarna i Göta hovrätt 1635–1754* (Umeå, 1993)
- Thomas, N. W. (ed.), collected by Black, G. F., *County Folk-Lore. Examples of printed folklore concerning the Orkney & Shetland Islands*, vol. 3 (London, 1903)
- Thomas, K., *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London, 1971)
- Thompson, S. (ed.), *Motif-index of Folk Literature* (Charlottesville, 2004)
- Thomson, W. P. L., *History of Orkney* (Edinburgh, 1987)
- Toivo, R. M., 'Women at Stake: Interpretations of Women's Roles in Witchcraft', *Arv, Nordic Yearbook of Folklore*, lxii (2006), 187–202
- Tønnesson, J., *Hva er sakprosa* (Oslo, 2008)
- Vitoux, P., 'Le jeu de la focalisation', *Poétique*, no. 51 (1982), 359–368
- Volmer, R., 'Hexenjagd im Territorium der Reichsabtei St Maximin vor Trier', in W. Reichert, G. Minn and R. Voltmer (eds.), *Quellen zur Geschichte des Rhein-Maas-Raumes* (Trier, 2006), 227–71
- Voltmer, R., 'Hexenverfolgungen im Maas-Rhein-Mosel-Raum', in Irsigler, F., (ed.), *Beziehungen, Begegnungen und Konflikte in einem europäischen Kernraum von der Spätantike bis zum 19. Jahrhundert* (Trier, 2006)
- Voltmer, R., 'Netzwerk, Denkollektiv oder Dschungel?', *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung*, 34:3 (2007), 486–87
- Voltmer, R., 'St Maximin, Prince-Abbey of', in Golden (ed.), *Encyclopedia*, 4 vols., iv, 1082–3
- Voltmer, R., 'Vom getrübbten Blick auf frühneuzeitlichen Hexenverfolgungen – Versuch einer Klärung', *Gnostika. Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft und Esotetik*, no. 11 (2006), 45–58
- Wasser, M., 'The privy council and the witches: the curtailment of witchcraft prosecutions in Scotland, 1597–1628', *SHR*, 82 (2003), 20–46
- Wessel, A.B., *Ambrosius Rhodius, en til Finnmarken forvist læge i det 17de aar hundrede* (Kirkenes, 1929)
- Wiesner-Hanks, M., 'Gender' in Golden (ed.), *Encyclopedia*, 4 vols., ii, 407
- Williamson, A. H., 'Scots, Indian and Empire: The Scottish politics of civilization, 1519–1609', *Past and Present*, no. 150 (1996), 46–83
- Willumsen, L. H., 'Narratologi som tekstanalytisk metode' [Narratology as text-analytical tool], in M. Brekke (ed.) *Å begripe teksten* (Kristiansand, 2006), 39–72
- Willumsen, L. H., *Trollkvinne i nord* [Witch in the North] (Tromsø, 1994)
- Willumsen, L. H., *Trollkvinne i nord i historiske kilder og skjønnlitteratur* [Witch in the North in historical sources and literature] (University of Tromsø, Master's thesis, 1984)
- Willumsen, L. H., 'Witches in Scotland and Northern Norway: two case studies', in A. Kruse and P. Graves, *Images and Imaginations. Perspectives on Britain and Scandinavia* (Edinburgh, 2007), 35–66
- Willumsen, L. H., 'Witches of the High North. The Finnmark Witchcraft Trials in the Seventeenth Century', *Scandinavian Journal of History*, xxii, no. 3 (1997), 199–221

- Withers, C. W. J., 'Gaelic in Scotland before 1609' in *Gaelic in Scotland 1698–1981. The geographical History of a Language* (Edinburgh, 1984), 16–41
- Withers, C. W. J., *Caelic Scotland. The Transformation of a Culture Region* (London, 1988)
- Withrington, D. J., (ed.), *Shetland and the outside world 1469–1969* (Oxford, 1983)
- Wormald, J., 'The Witches, the Devil and the King' in T. Brotherstone and D. Ditchburn, *Freedom and Authority* (East Linton, 2000), 165–180
- Östling, P.-A., 'Blåkulla Journeys in Swedish Folklore', in *Arv, Nordic Yearbook of Folklore*, vol. lxii (2006), 81–122
- Aaslestad, P., *Pasienten som tekst*, (Oslo, 1997)
- Åstrand, B., *Tortyr och pinlig förhör – våld och tvång i äldre svensk rätt* (Umeå University, Ph.D. thesis, 2000)

References to figures

- Figure 1 Larner, C., *Enemies of God*, (London, 1981), 30
- Figure 2 SSW
- Figure 3 SSW
- Figure 4 SSW
- Figure 5 SSW
- Figure 6 SSW
- Figure 7 Fladby, R. and Schou, T., (eds.), *Skattematrikkelen 1647* (Oslo, 1978), 111
- Figure 8 Court records, Finnmark, coded in SPSS
- Figure 9 Court records, Finnmark, coded in SPSS
- Figure 10 Court records, Finnmark, coded in SPSS
- Figure 11 Court records, Finnmark, coded in SPSS
- Figure 12 Anderson, P., *Black Patie* (Edinburgh, 1992), 29
- Figure 13 SSW
- Figure 14 SSW
- Figure 15 Anderson, P., *Black Patie* (Edinburgh, 1992), 31
- Figure 16 SSW
- Figure 17 Willumsen, L. H., *Trollkvinne i nord* (Tromsø, 1994), 36
- Figure 18 Willumsen, L. H., *Trollkvinne i nord* (Tromsø, 1994), 37
- Figure 19 www.kautokeino.kommune.no/samiskesamlinger

Abstract

Seventeenth-Century Witchcraft Trials in Scotland and Northern Norway is a comparative study of witchcraft persecution in Scotland and Finnmark, the northernmost region of Norway. The hypothesis to be tested is that the historical witch-hunts in the two regions are complex phenomena, wherein several influential explanatory factors are at work: the demonological element, the role of the state, the local courts, the role of the church, neighbourhood disputes, the spoken word, folk belief, the superstitious north, the personal factor and lastly a direct connection between Scotland and Finnmark through a Scottish district governor installed in Finnmark. A wide range of quantitative and qualitative analyses shed light on the witch-hunts in the two regions during the period 1600-1700. The analyses are based on primary sources from witchcraft persecution, mainly legal documents. The quantitative chapters contain statistical analyses and give information about tendencies in the source material in total. The qualitative chapters contain close-readings of trial documents from a narratological perspective. Through discourse analyses the various voices heard during a trial are analysed: the voice of the scribe, the voice of the law, the voice of the accused person and the voices of the witnesses. The quantitative and qualitative analyses combined provide a broad view of the historical phenomenon in question as well as in-depth studies of individual witchcraft cases. The main finding of the quantitative analyses is that there is a strong correlation between use of torture, demonic pact confessions, panics, local courts and females. The same finding is strengthened by the qualitative analyses, which in addition point to the introduction of demonological notions by the learned elite, the spread of these notions in oral societies, the important roles of government officials and the direct Scottish connection through a governmental official as explanatory factors. The conclusion is that the impact of the demonological doctrine on legal and clerical institutions, the use of torture in local courts to extract demonological confessions and the pressure from local communities to start a witchcraft trial must be seen as influential factors during the witchcraft trials in Scotland and Finnmark.